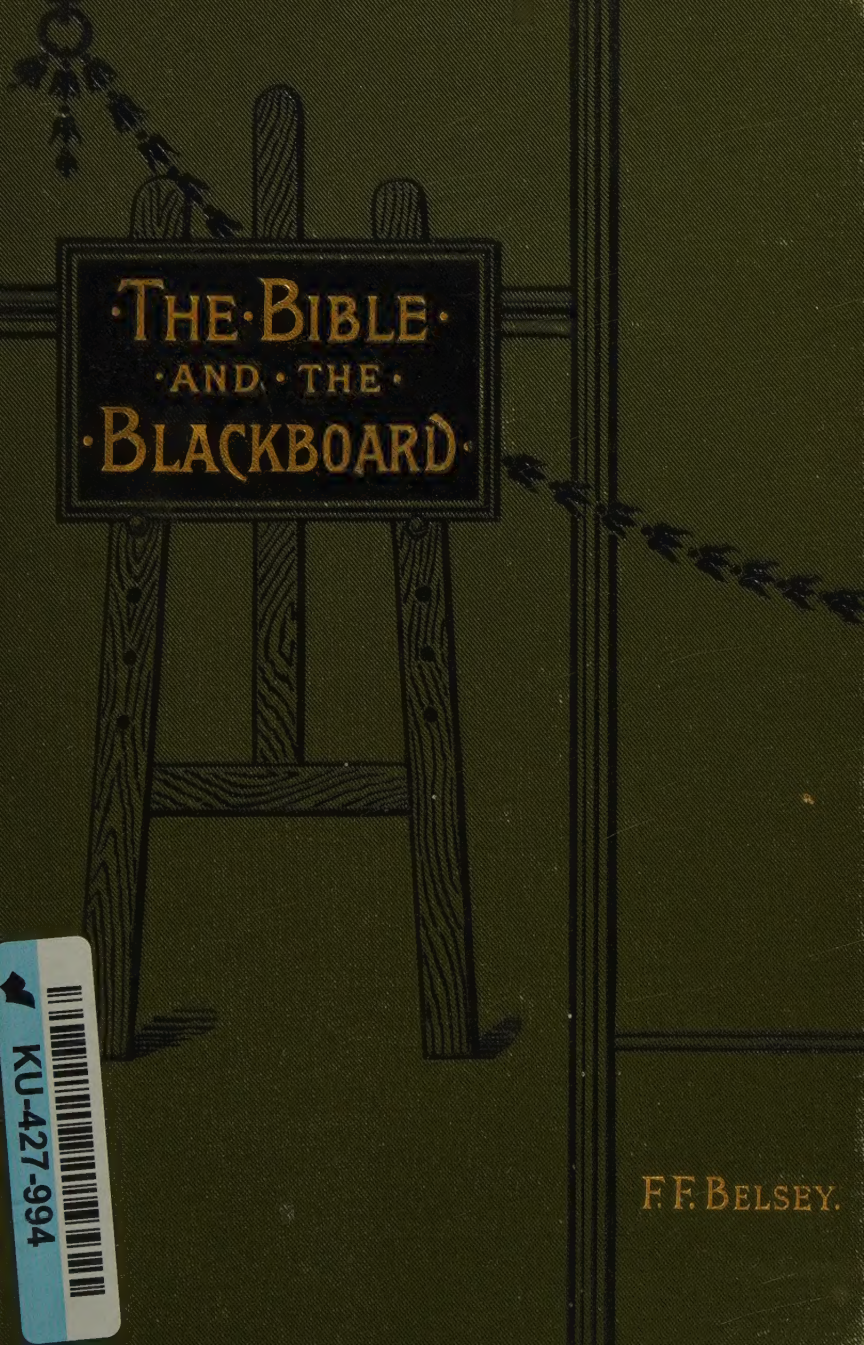


F. F. BELSEY.

KU-427-994

GOOD NEWS CENTRE
NEWENT

THE BIBLE AND THE BLACKBOARD

PRINTED BY MORRISON AND GIBB LIMITED, EDINBURGH.

Lesson Plan, showing the use of Coloured Chalks.

THE BIBLE

AND

THE BLACKBOARD

Scripture Lessons for EYE and EAR

By F. F. BELSEY

CHAIRMAN OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION COUNCIL
AND PRESIDENT WORLD'S FIRST SUNDAY SCHOOL CONVENTION
(LONDON, 1889)

WITH NUMEROUS LESSON PLANS

LONDON:
THE SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION
57 AND 59 LUDGATE HILL, E.C.
1896

Second Edition.

EYE-TEACHING IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL. Profusely Illustrated with Blackboard Plans. By R. W. SINDALL. Post 8vo, cloth boards, 1s. 6d.

"We have seldom been more pleased with any book issued in the interests of Sunday-school teachers."—*Sunday School Times.*

OUTLINE ADDRESSES ON SCRIPTURE EMBLEMS. With Illustrations. By SARAH G. STOCK. Post 8vo, cloth boards, 1s. 6d.

LONDON:

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION,

57 AND 59 LUDGATE HILL, E.C.

INTRODUCTION

"Things seen are mightier than things heard."
TENNYSON.

TEACHERS of experience will see in the above line of our late Laureate more than a poetic fancy. They will have no difficulty in accepting it as a terse and happy statement of a well-known educational fact. The eye is the best and broadest avenue along which knowledge and impressions can travel into the mind and memory. In the lecture theatres of our colleges its advantages have long been appreciated, and blackboard, diagram, and experiment have helped the teacher, through the eye, to get the scientific truth understood and remembered by the student. Nor has the Sunday school altogether ignored the existence of these instruments of instruction. It is true their employment may be rare and occasional in other than our infants' departments ; but many teachers, who have discovered the advantage of driving ear and eye in pair harness, are earnestly seeking for guidance in applying some simple principles of illustration by chart or blackboard to the work of imparting Bible truth. How often, in our Sunday schools, does the great Enemy of our children's souls seek through the eye to distract

the attention and dissipate the impression! Happy, therefore, will be the teacher who, claiming both these organs, eye and ear, for his Master and His work, can with more certain, rapid, and undisturbed inflow convey the waters of Life and Truth to the cistern of his scholars' mind and heart. The following lessons, culled from amongst those contributed weekly to the *Sunday School Chronicle*, are published, in the hope that they may furnish some helpful suggestions to teachers of this class, and that others may presently regard the blackboard with the same almost affectionate gratitude entertained for it by the writer, as an instrument of instruction which has lightened and brightened his own past years of Sunday-school labour. The reader will observe that lessons of every class are dealt with, and that the blackboard has been employed in illustrating portions of God's Word, from the historical and prophetical books of the Old Testament, and from the Gospels and Epistles in the New.

There are, however, a few words of explanation as to some important details it may be well to include in this Introduction.

In the few works already published on blackboard teaching, it will be observed that symbols are largely, if not exclusively, employed. Crowns, crosses, anchors, lamps, ladders, etc., are used, at the serious risk of confusing young minds, and hiding the structure of truth behind a scaffolding which sometimes is never taken down. The value of the blackboard is rather in its power, by suitable and direct illustration, to clear the difficulties, impress the facts, and apply the doctrines of each particular lesson, and by some written outline to enable the scholar to memorise and retain the truth taught.

In the following examples the writer's aim has been, first of all, to discover by what simple sketches the Bible narrative of fact could be made more real and comprehensible, or the Bible doctrine be illustrated and made clear; and then how the outline of the spoken discourse could in condensed form be so written down as to be easily memorised and carried away. My readers will already be familiar with many of the methods adopted in these pages. The principal novelty in the written outlines is the employment of verse and rhyme as the form for this condensation. Such verse, built up during the progress of the lesson, or completed during its review by the filling up of the omitted words by the scholars, aided only by the initials given, provides an exercise children watch with interest, co-operate in with excited attention, and when completed treasure up with ease.

These rough metrical rhymes may be sung, and thus more rapidly memorised; and the children may be encouraged to write them down in little notebooks and preserve them for future reference and use, along with such rough copies of the pictures as their small skill may enable them to secure. Teachers who may complain of inability to produce such simple pictures or compose such humble doggerel, may be reminded that few schools are nowadays without their art students, who could do the sketching, while the lesson verse printed on the leaflets or other helps would generally relieve them from the necessity of seeking out some poetaster, or ransacking the hymn-book for an appropriate stanza.

Others, who reasonably complain that in an open school, amongst neighbouring small classes, blackboard teaching is

practically impossible, may be reminded that equally good results may be obtained from sketches and outlines written on a sheet of cardboard, or of paper fastened on a drawing-board laid on some small table, or even upon the teacher's knees.

Coloured chalks give additional brightness and interest to the lessons, and, it will be observed, often enable the teacher to secure effects and produce impressions impossible with white only. In filling up the lesson verses, the teacher may stimulate the interest and attention of the class, by filling up in *coloured* chalk every word correctly given by the class, and in *white* any word they fail to discover and he has to supply.

It may be presumptuous for so poor an artist to give suggestions as to the execution of these rough drawings. Those very suggestions will probably disclose his own want of artistic training. He would venture, however, to say, Don't attempt too nice and accurate an outline. As in scene painting, the bold and almost reckless smear or touch will in the distance produce the most striking effect. A pink smear made in the right direction will often give quite an expressive human face, and a white or brown one will attach a flowing beard or waving locks. Costumes, animals, etc., should be practised from suitable copies, till the stroke or two that makes a sheep, a tent, or an Eastern sheikh, grow familiar as the alphabet. Attention to perspective and relative size is of course very important, and a faint outline of the group or picture put first of all upon the board or card, is very helpful.

While dealing with the artistic side of this small work, the writer's most grateful acknowledgments are due to his friend

and colleague, Mr. E. J. Witchell, of Brockley, for the unwearied care and kindness with which he has prepared the blackboard designs for the press. To his skill as a draughtsman their neat reduction and occasional improvement of design is due. These voluntary and sympathetic efforts have made the task of thus setting forth the uses of the blackboard far easier and more agreeable.

In conclusion, it is hoped the indulgent reader will look into these lessons not so much for literary merit and artistic skill—to which they make no pretensions—as for the sympathetic desire of a plain lay teacher to make the work he loves as pleasant to others as, through God's help and blessing, it has become to himself, by the adoption for many years past of the methods herein explained.

F. F. B.

ROCHESTER, *April* 1896.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	5
I. MOSES' NOBLE CHOICE (Acts 7: 22–37) . . .	13
II. AARON, THE HIGH PRIEST (Numb. 12: 1–9; 20: 22–29)	17
III. JOB; OR, SANCTIFIED AFFLICTION (Job 42) . .	21
IV. MEPHIBOSHETH'S GRATITUDE (2 Sam. 9; 19: 24–30) .	25
V. SOLOMON'S WISDOM (1 Kings 3: 1–15) . . .	29
VI. JOASH; OR, FAIR PROSPECTS BLIGHTED (2 Chron. 24: 1–22)	33
VII. UZZIAH; OR, THE PERILS OF PROSPERITY (2 Chron. 26)	36
VIII. JOSIAH'S GOOD REIGN (2 Kings 22) . . .	39
IX. THE DOWNFALL OF JUDAH (2 Kings 24: 17—25: 12) .	43
X. A SAVIOUR PROMISED (Isa. 11: 1–9) . . .	47
XI. THE ONE LIVING AND TRUE GOD (Isa. 45: 11–25) .	50
XII. JEREMIAH'S FIDELITY AND COURAGE (Jer. 26: 8–24) .	53
XIII. THE CAPTIVES IN BABYLON (Dan. 1) . . .	56
XIV. PRIDE AND ITS PUNISHMENT (Dan. 4: 24–37) . .	60
XV. THE DEN OF LIONS (Dan. 6: 10–23) . . .	64
XVI. JONAH, THE DISCONTENTED PROPHET (Jonah 4) .	68
XVII. THE HAPPY LIFE—I. (Matt. 5: 1–6) . . .	71
XVIII. THE HAPPY LIFE—II. (Matt. 5: 7–12) . . .	75
XIX. THE LORD'S PRAYER (Matt. 6: 9–15) . . .	79

PAGE

XX. PARABLE OF THE TARES (Matt. 13: 24–30, 36–43) . 83

XXI. PARABLE OF THE LABOURERS (Matt. 20: 1–16) . . 87

XXII. JESUS TEACHES HUMILITY (Matt. 20: 17–28) . 91

XXIII. CHILDREN OF THE KINGDOM (Eph. 4: 17—5: 2) . 95

XXIV. THE CHRISTIAN ARMOUR (Eph. 6: 10–20) . . 98

XXV. THE PERFECT EXAMPLE (Phil. 2: 5–8; 1 Pet. 2: 17–25) 102

XXVI. SLEEPING IN JESUS (1 Thess. 4: 13–18; 5: 6–10) . 106

XXVII. MOSES AND JESUS (Heb. 3) 109

XXVIII. THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST (Heb. 4: 14—5: 10) . . 113

XXIX. MEN OF FAITH (HEB. 11: 32—12: 2) . . . 117

XXX. THE GREAT INVITATION (Rev. 22: 8–21) . . 120

XXXI. REVIEW SUNDAY 124

THE

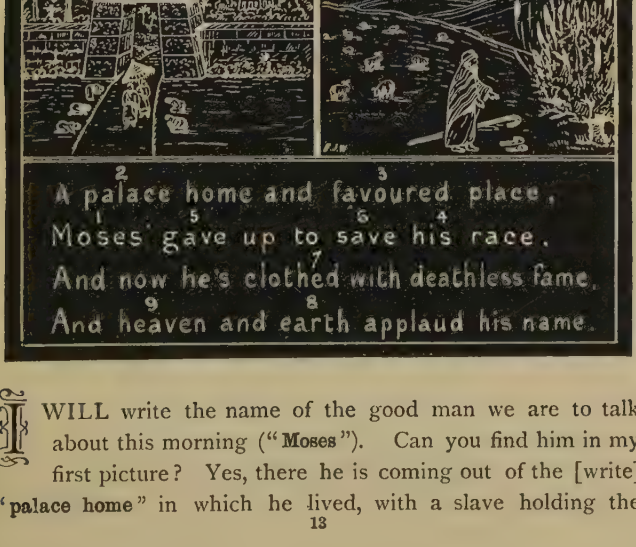
BIBLE AND THE BLACKBOARD

I

MOSES' NOBLE CHOICE

(Acts 7 : 22–37)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." —*Heb. 11 : 25.*


MOSES' NOBLE CHOICE.
2 3
A palace home and favoured place,
1 5 6 4
Moses gave up to save his race.
7
And now he's clothed with deathless fame,
9 8
And heaven and earth applaud his name.

I WILL write the name of the good man we are to talk about this morning ("**Moses**"). Can you find him in my first picture? Yes, there he is coming out of the [write] "**palace home**" in which he lived, with a slave holding the

large umbrella over him, and people bending the knee to him on either side. But let me see whether you remember the story of how he got there.

Question out the points of his history—his birth, his danger, the ark of bulrushes, the princess, the nurse, the early years in the Jewish home, Jochebed's teachings about his forefathers and God's promises, the change when a little boy to the palace where Thermutis (Pharaoh's daughter) took care of him, and treated him as her son. Then describe Egyptian people—at that time first, wisest, strongest, richest people in the world; his education. Tell what Jews believe about his life at Pharaoh's court: brave general, winning battles for his king. So he not only had a palace home with Pharaoh and Thermutis, but a [write] "**favoured place.**" Perhaps he, by and by, may even take Pharaoh's place, and be the greatest king in the world, if he only takes care and pleases the Egyptians.

But if we could look under that umbrella, we should see a shade of sadness over his face. Something grieves him. Although he has everything to make him happy, he cannot forget his dear old mother's early talks about [write] "**his race.**' Don't you remember those lessons in the infant school? The little hymns and texts we learned so long ago? How they come to us! But Moses had something better than these memories. Look at the chapter in Hebrews our Golden Text is taken from. Now, tell me what it was made Moses give up his home and place? Yes, "By faith." He thought more of God than of Pharaoh, or Thermutis, or himself. He saw Canaan, and heaven, and glory, and life, all coming; and Egypt, and earth, and brickyards, and death, all vanishing. Oh, that eye of faith! Who of us has it? Who sees God in all His love and glory, and all the big bad folk of earth in all their real smallness and vanity? Who would rather hear

Jesus Christ's "Well done!" at the judgment-day, than have his name in all the papers, and all the people praise him here? That boy, that girl, has what Moses had.

But don't forget "faith without works is dead." Moses knew this, and so he set himself to see what he could do for his people. He went to the new cities they were building, to the brickyards where they toiled, saw the heavy burdens, the cruel taskmasters, heard the groans and cries, tried to cheer them, hoped they would look to him and trust him; but their poor slave hearts were too dull and dead to care a bit for anybody. Question as to Moses's mistake: "looking this way and that way," showed he knew he was wrong, and was going on without God; the murder, the flight, and so he [write] "**gave up**" his palace home and favoured place, because he wanted [write] "**to save**" his race. Question—Where did he go? What happened to him there? His wife, his sons, his work? How long?

Then use second picture. How old—look at white beard—eighty years old, twice his age in first picture! The grand prince has become a poor shepherd, and has lived forty years away from the court and all his grand friends. What a bad choice he seems to have made! But was it so? Question: The bush, the shoes, the command, the journey, the plagues, the deliverance, the Red Sea, the desert, the new nation of God's people? Oh, what a grand further forty years God had waiting for His faithful servant! How Egypt and the desert had both done their part in training him for this glorious work! And now, of all the names of men known over the world, there is none men speak of and honour more than that of Moses. You will hear folks on every continent speak of him with reverence and honour, [write] "**And now he's clothed with deathless fame.**" "**Earth applauds his name**"—has done it for ages—will do it till time is no more.

And then, that is not all. The praises of earth must all soon melt away in the vast spaces of eternity. What they say about us in heaven is everything. One word of praise from Jesus is worth more than the hurrahs of a hundred nations. And now, who can tell me anything about the fame of Moses in [write] "**heaven**"? Do you remember the name of heaven's sweetest anthem? The Song of Moses and the Lamb. I hope we will all some day learn it, and then we shall see what honour God kept for the man who made the noble choice, and by faith "suffered affliction."

Apply: We must make our choice. What shall it be? "Thy people shall be my people." "This God is our God, for ever and ever; He will be our guide even unto death."

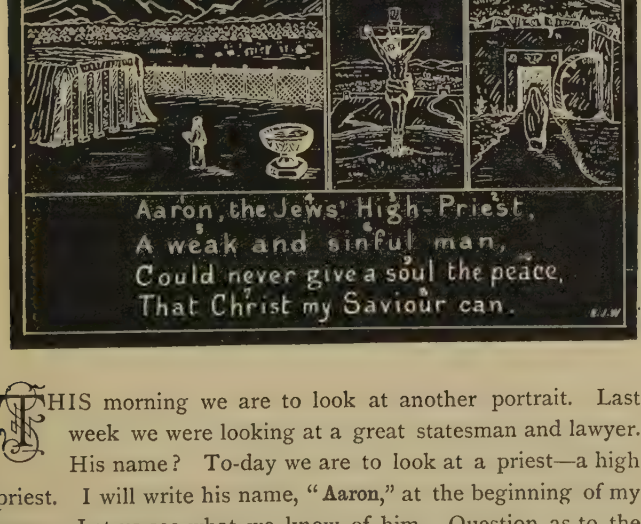
Review questions. Repeat, memorise, and sing the completed verse.

II

AARON, THE HIGH PRIEST

(NUMB. 12 : 1-9 ; 20 : 22-29)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"**This man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.**"—*Heb. 7 : 24.*


AARON THE HIGH PRIEST
Aaron, the Jews' High-Priest,
A weak and sinful man,
Could never give a soul the peace,
That Christ my Saviour can.

THIS morning we are to look at another portrait. Last week we were looking at a great statesman and lawyer. His name? To-day we are to look at a priest—a high priest. I will write his name, "**Aaron**," at the beginning of my verse. Let us see what we know of him. Question as to the family of Moses. When do we first hear of Aaron? How did

he help Moses? What was their sister's name? What do we remember of Miriam? Watching the ark; sounding the timbrel at the Red Sea shore, etc. Then picture these three leading God's people. Much together—sharing burdens.

Now we must see what God chose Aaron to be. Let me write "**Priest.**" Let us think, now, what is a priest. One who goes with others to God, offers their sacrifices, speaks their prayers, pleads for them, listens for God's answer, and then tells them, if it come, what is God's will. Who first did this? The father of the family—Noah, Job, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. But now Israel has grown from a family into a big nation, and God at Sinai has taught them how He is to be worshipped; all about the Tabernacle, the offerings, the altars, the feasts, and the cleansings. As all this would want much care and time, and thought and reverence, God chose one tribe to be His servants. Which was that? One family to be His priests. Whose? Aaron's. Why not Moses'? Think of reasons. He, so busy, could not do everything. Sons not pure Jews. Married a Midianite or Cushite, daughter of Jethro. God gives His own work to the workman He sees can do it best. So Aaron was made the [write] "**Jews' High**" [or Chief] "**Priest,**" and his sons after him were to take this high and solemn place.

Now let us think what would he have to do. Tell and question :—Morning and evening sacrifices, Holy Place, candlestick, shewbread, incense, and then great day when every year he once went right into God's holiest place, before the Ark and Mercy-seat, to make atonement for the nation and get pardon for all their sins. Look at my picture, here we see him doing this. He has washed himself so clean at that great laver, has put off all his beautiful garments, left them in the Holy Place, too grand to stand before God in, when atoning for all that sin. He has put on just plain white robes, no ornaments, has killed the sacrifices, and now, all alone in the empty Tabernacle, while

Israel, trembling, watches through those open curtains, he is carrying in a bowl of the victim's blood, to sprinkle before God's Mercy-seat to atone for His people's sin, and obtain their pardon. When he has done this, he puts off his plain white robes, puts on all his beautiful garments, and comes out; how the people rejoice to see him! to let them know the great atonement has been made, and all their year's wickedness God forgives, because they have obeyed His commands, and have gone to Him just as He told them.

But if the high priest ever did bad things, how afraid the people would be that all could not be right! They wanted a perfect priest. And then they had to come up next year and see it done again. Oh, how they wished for a high priest who could once and for ever put away sin! God had such an One coming, and Aaron and all these priests, his sons and grandsons, were to get Israel ready for Him.

But now let us look at our lesson. It shows us Aaron was only a [write] "**weak and sinful man.**" [Use ch. 12: 1–9.] His new office has made him proud. He is older than Moses, and now thinks God is going to put him properly into the place of the first-born; and a little while ago Zipporah came home with her sons to the tent of her husband Moses, and now there is another woman in the camp who is nearer to Moses even than Miriam is; so they both grumble at Moses about his Cushite wife. How does he take it? Who hears it all? What does God do? The rebuke, the leprosy, the seven days' separation, the shame, the lesson. Ah yes! the first great Jews' priest is, as we have written him, a weak, sinful man.

Our second section shows he had to die outside Canaan. He was never to be their priest in Canaan. Describe and question: Mount Hor—the ascent—the disrobing, the clothing of Eleazar —the death—the burial—the descent.

Well, this is the picture of the Jews' first high priest. A sinner who missed Canaan, and who did wrong, and had to be rebuked and punished. How glad we are God had a better High Priest coming by and by! Who was He? See, I have a picture here of His great day of atonement side by side with Aaron's. Look, here on the cross He is giving Himself as our sacrifice. Through that grave like the Holy Place, He goes up to God in the white linen of the grave, bearing, as it were, His own most precious blood as our atonement. Soon He comes back again from that heavenly Holy of Holies, and, leaving the white garments in the grave, comes out in His new heavenly body to tell us that precious blood is accepted once for all, and that all the people who trust Him as their great High Priest are pardoned, free, and safe for Canaan, where He goes before us—our great, interceding High Priest for evermore.

Now, complete verse ; [write] in "**Christ, my Saviour.**" Is He? Will you take Him? Can "**give a soul the peace** that Aaron never could."

Read, sing, commit to memory. Review questions.

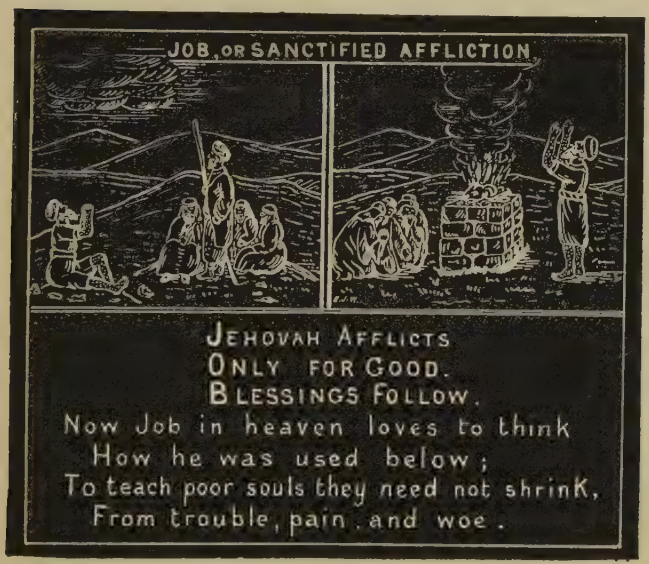
Caution, in closing, against all other "priests." Christ was last of the race, the great High Priest. "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." "All ye are brethren." Preachers, people, teachers, scholars, will all suffer loss if they trust in any other priest but Jesus.

III

JOB; OR, SANCTIFIED AFFLICTION

(Job 42)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth."
—Heb. 12 : 6.


JOB, OR SANCTIFIED AFFLICTION
JEHOVAH AFFLICTS
ONLY FOR GOOD.
BLESSINGS FOLLOW.
Now Job in heaven loves to think
How he was used below;
To teach poor souls they need not shrink,
From trouble, pain, and woe.

MIND how you turn the page over this morning. Don't tear the paper; it is the oldest leaf in the Bible. Let me put his name in three capital letters, one under another; we shall want them presently.

Now, I want you to look at my first picture, and see if you can show me the one I mean for Job out of those five men. Yes, you're right, the poor fellow by himself, legs and arms all covered with boils, with the potsherds lying there beside him. Now, who can tell me his story? Where did he live? Where was Uz? Yes, most likely, that great shepherds' land of Padan Aram where Abram sojourned and Nahor dwelt. When did he live? Well, of that, too, we can't be quite certain, but very likely a little earlier than Abram, and the book was most likely written before Moses wrote Genesis and his other books.

Now for his story. Riches, honour, goodness, children, fear of God, God's favour, Satan, his talk with God about Job; the first trials, riches lost, children die, left desolate, still trusting God; the second trial, cruel personal suffering, boils, leprosy. Thus we see him in our picture.

These three friends sitting on the heap beside him—Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar—have come to mourn with him; this young man, Elihu, standing listening to all their long discourse and quarrel, by and by, when they have given him leave to speak, shows all four where they are wrong; and then, as he is talking, a great black crashing storm of thunder gathers round and bursts, and out from it comes God's own voice, saying, in grander, deeper words, the truths young Elihu had just uttered. And then, as God speaks, Elihu's words having already shown poor Job his mistake, he utterly humbles himself, owns God just, gives up all talk about his own righteousness. Then God owns and honours him, rebukes his three friends, and bids them get the poor boil-covered, broken-down Job to stand for them before Him as their priest, and offer a sacrifice to save them from deserved punishment.

In our second picture we see him doing this, and I wish I could show you the wonderful change that came over good Job while he stood there praying for his friends. God turned again

his captivity, set him free from his dreadful disease. There [take pink chalk], let me mark out all the dreadful spots—flesh like little child's now—like Naaman's, you remember; and then our lesson tells us all about the double wealth and new children, and friends and honour and glory God gave him.

But now, this morning, it is from the talk those five men had, and from the mistakes they made, and the truths they saw, and God's last teaching, we are to get some precious lessons. At starting they were all four right on one point. Let me write it after Job's J here, "**Jehovah afflicts.**" Not one of them thought about that wicked, wandering Satan. Perhaps some of you wanted to stop my hand a minute ago, and make me write "Satan" afflicts. He is very glad when Jehovah lets him, and waits like a raging lion for the wicked God gives up to him; but he can do nothing of himself, and if he ever gets near some child of God, he has to ask leave for everything. God never lets him harm him, and he walks away at last wishing he had never touched him, for he has only done him good, and that makes him wretched. So, if you dear young ones love and trust Jesus, when pain and trouble come, do not think Satan afflicts. No, Jehovah afflicts; our loving Father sends all the pain and sorrow.

But next they made a sad mistake. The friends made one; Job made one. The friends said, "God sent trouble only as punishment," and they made poor Job sad at heart, and set all the low, wicked roughs of Uz singing songs about "Job the hypocrite," because they would have it God would never have sent such dreadful trials on a man unless he had some great sins hidden away somewhere. Then this made poor Job make another mistake. He knew of no such great sins, and then, because his friends were unjust, he began to think God must be unjust too, and though he still loved and feared Him, he

wanted to argue with Him, and plead his case, and show how just he was.

Young Elihu, standing there listening, sees they are all wrong. He shows them Jehovah afflicts His people [write] "**only for good,**"—to make them better, wiser, more His loving, willing children ; and then he shows poor Job that, instead of God being unjust to him, he has been unjust to God—lost the child's loving trust in the Great Father. And then comes the great storm and God's voice, and then poor Job humbles down, quite ashamed of himself, looks up to God, and God looks down on him—Father and child once more, and then [write] "**blessings follow,**" such a shower. [Read vers. 12–17.]

Apply : Man is born to trouble. You and I must have afflictions. Don't forget our three heads. Bear affliction that others may see what a blessed thing it is to belong to Jesus and trust Him. How glad we shall be, when all is over, to remember we bore them meekly ! Let us fill in our verse. Read, sing, memorise.

Review questions.

IV

MEPHIBOSHETH'S GRATITUDE

(2 Sam. 9; 19: 24-30)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace."—2 *Sam. 19: 30.*

MEPHIBOSHETH'S GRATITUDE
In young Mephibosheth I see
A type of God's great love to me
Lord, make me thankful for the grace
That gives me in Thy courts a place.

NOW, this morning I think we are going to look at, perhaps, the strangest of our Bible portraits. He not only has a long name,—let me write it, "**Mephibosheth**,"—but we are to see him with long hair and beard,

with very dirty, unwashed feet and clothes. And if we watch him closely, we shall see he carries sticks or crutches, for the poor man is "lame in both his feet." Whatever lesson can he teach us? Well, it is one we need, most of us, to learn very badly. Here it is in the title [point, "Gratitude"]. What does that long word mean? "Thank you." Well, that will do if we remember three things about our "Thank you." It is nice to say "Thank you." It is better to feel "Thank you.' It is best to live "Thank you." The man who feels, says, and lives "Thank you," is a grateful man. But now we must see what it was this poor lame man had to be thankful for.

Let us find out his story. Who was the first king of Israel? Who the prince who ought to have succeeded him? Why was there no King Jonathan? Who had the throne from God instead? Why? How did Jonathan feel towards this new king who would take his place?

Question out the story of their deep, long, true friendship, of their farewell meeting about six years before Jonathan died, and one year before Mephibosheth was born. Remind of David's promise to be kind and good to any of his friend's children who might ever be in his power. Then tell or question out the principal events of those last six years, but chiefly the last sad scene in Saul's and Jonathan's history—the battle of Gilboa, their deaths, the terror following their defeat, people flying, the scene in Jonathan's house, the faithful nurse waking up the little five-year-old boy, dragging him along, fancying every sound she hears is the shout of some cruel Philistine upon their track. At last the little legs give out. She picks him up. A fine five-year-old is a big load for a weak, breathless woman to carry. [Use first picture.] Soon her foot trips, down they fall, and she picks up the poor screaming, wounded child, and carries him, perhaps for miles, before the little broken bones can be set and attended to.

We can now understand the poor man having grown up a helpless cripple, lame in both his feet. Then tell or question about his hiding-place, with good, kind, faithful Machir in the far-off land of Lo-debar—few know who he is, they keep his family a secret. Why? What harm often befel the little sons of kings who were put off their thrones?

Can you tell me of any sons thus killed? Thus the lame boy was kept in safety till he came at last to be a man, a husband, and the father of a bright, strong boy he named Micah.

But a great change is coming. [Use lesson.] David thinking of Jonathan. Wanting to show his [write] "**great love.**" Sending for Ziba, sending for Mephibosheth, the latter's fears, his coming to Jerusalem, David's kindness, Mephibosheth's thanks, his new life, Ziba bringing him all the money he wanted while he lived with the king and princes at the royal table, and David all the time never tired of doing kind things for the poor lame son of his dear old friend.

Let me write in a few more words, [write] "**thankful**"—"**a place in courts**"—for we may be sure Mephibosheth felt this. But now we must take the second part of our lesson. What has happened between? Question or tell: Absalom's revolt, David's flight, friendly assistance. Use second picture: Ziba with asses, and nice food, Machir too. So we see Mephibosheth's friends proved true, grateful friends in adversity to the good king who was looking after their young master. But was Ziba a true friend? Tell of his cruel treachery, his falsehoods, his theft of Saul's land, his trick to his young master—but the trick is found out. Describe David's return, his stern look at poor Mephibosheth, his defence, his wretched appearance bearing witness to his grief—and then, lastly, his plain joy at his good king's return—and willingness [repeat Golden Text] to let Ziba have all the land, since good King David was

home in the palace again. Real gratitude, after all, was it not?

Now, what lessons can we learn from this poor, lame, untidy prince? Can we think of any people—lame, outcast, living in a far country, poor, helpless? Of any great King who wants to show His loving-kindness to them for some dear one's sake, to whom He has given—like David to Jonathan—a covenant promise? Oh yes. We soon see [write] "**In young Mephibosheth I see A type of God's great love to me.**" He calls me to His courts, feeds me at His table, shows me much love because I am a believer in Jesus, His own dear Son. And how must I show my love to Him? He is away in glory. Like Mephibosheth, I am in Jerusalem among the rebels. I must keep aloof from them, mourn my absent Lord; and when He comes, as come He soon will, my grateful joy must first repeat that Golden Text, "Let Him take all, forasmuch as my Lord the King is come again in peace." Let me make our little verse into a prayer that such thankful grace may be ours. Fill in verse. Read, memorise, sing.

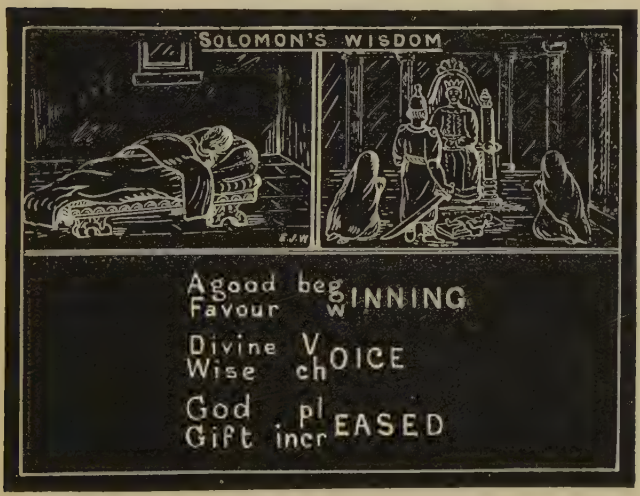
Review questions.

V

SOLOMON'S WISDOM

(1 KINGS 3: 1–15)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Give therefore Thy servant an understanding heart."—*1 Kings 3 : 9.*



THIS morning we look at another portrait. Only a young king, yet the wisest king who ever sat upon a throne. His name is written here, Solomon. His great gift here, "Wisdom." You will, I am sure, want to know how he got it. Let us see.

Introduce : Beginning of a new king's reign always interesting. What kind of man is he? What kind of king will he make? Late Czar of Russia ; how we all wanted to know about his son, the Czarewitch, who is now the Emperor.

Here is a new king, who, having reigned six months along with his father, is now left all by himself to reign. Describe his father's cautions, charges, to fear and obey God, and keep His law. Nathan. God's promises. How will he behave? How begin his reign?

We shall have six points this morning, and, as I want you to remember them, I have made the three couples each end with the same letters. Let us see how we can use these first. Now, can you think of the first point with their help? Yes. I will write, "**A good beginning.**"

Question : The two sacred tents ; the Ark, with the singers, on Mount Zion ; the altar, with the priests, at Gibeon, a high hilltop a little north of Jerusalem?

Solomon feels he must begin with sacrifice. Why? Calls his people together to join him there ; sacrificed a thousand oxen upon the old brazen altar Bezaleel made. Thus, with his people, he sought God in His own appointed way, and strove thus to gain His favour ; and then, as the greater part of such sacrifices would be eaten by the people, they all had a grand, long feast, and were very pleased with their generous young king.

So I may put my second point as—yes, "**Favour winning.**" He thus, by this good beginning, grew in favour both with God and man. Then use first picture. Describe Solomon, after all the day's excitement, sleeping on his bed ; the dream ; God's voice ; His offer—"Ask what I shall give thee." How many things Solomon could have thought of when he heard the [write] "**Divine voice.**" [Read vers. 6–9.]

Explain : An Eastern king's duties ; how people liked wise

judgments ; how they talked about them ; how they had missed David ; how Absalom had offered to be a judge instead of David. Now Queen appoints judges and magistrates to do all this for us.

Solomon thought of the six millions of people in the big country he was to rule, and felt his need. So this prayer was—next point? Yes, a "**wise choice.**" And now in ver. 10 we see it pleased God ; [write] "**God pleased.**" It showed Him the young king thought more of his duties than his delights, and was humble, felt his weakness, looked to Him for aid ; and so, just as He now says to us [repeat all together], "Seek ye first," etc., we find [read vers. 11–14] God the [write] "**gift increased**" "by adding unto him all"—what things? Yes, riches, honour, and long life. And thus it was King Solomon came to have such wonderful wisdom.

But now here, in my second picture, we shall see this wisdom in use, and better understand why Solomon wanted it, and how folks came to see God had made him wiser than other people.

Describe two women, overlaid baby (warn as to this danger in present day, and in our own homes)—the trick, appeal to king, no witness. What a puzzle! How can Solomon find out the truth? [Use picture.] Point to living baby laid before the throne. Calls for sword. Here's the soldier. The order. The two women. The real mother was thus found out.

To such wise judgments the young king added many wise proverbs ; much teaching about natural history, etc. And still we speak of him as the wisest of men.

Apply : Though not kings, we are beginning our life of rule and responsibility over self and others. Like Solomon, we should make a good beginning. Go not to Gibeon, but to Calvary. No thousand oxen, now Jesus has died to win us back God's favour. And now Christ says, "Ask, and it shall be

given you." What shall we seek first? [Golden Text.] An understanding heart; the righteousness, God, through Christ, can clothe us with—the righteousness of faith, without which we cannot please God. Giving us this, God will with Christ "freely give us all things." So a Christian boy or girl may now be wiser and happier really than Solomon himself.

Review questions. Repeat, and memorise points of lesson.

VI

JOASH; OR, FAIR PROSPECTS BLIGHTED

(2 CHRON. 24 : 1–22)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away."—*Hos. 6 : 4.*

OUR portrait this morning reminds us that a good beginning does not always mean a good ending; that the fairest objects are often blighted, like Jonah's gourd; and that some people's goodness, like the dewdrop, vanishes directly the hot sun of temptation shines out.

We shall see all this to be true in the case of this boy king,

"JOASH," whose name I have written here one letter under the other.

Let us find out his story. Question or describe: Son of wicked father; father's death at Samaria, through keeping bad company. Caution and illustrate: thrush shot among the sparrows. Athaliah's usurpation, murder of all his brothers, aunt's kindness, hidden in Temple by kind uncle (the high priest), [write] "**Jehoiada,**" one hundred years old. [Use first picture.]

Little boy seven years old walking round Temple with the old priest, sees broken walls and ruin made by his wicked older brothers, the bad queen's sons, who took away the gold and fine stones for their idol's temple; their talk about it, the child's wish some day to repair it and make all right again. Then story of his coronation, Athaliah's death, his heed of good Jehoiada's counsel, his repair of the Temple, thirty years of [write] "**obedience and joy.**"

But at last his good old friend died, one hundred and thirty years old, and Joash now has [write] "**altered surroundings.**" Some princes of Judah—bad men who want to bring back the old idol-worship—get round the king, and draw him into evil; persuade him to let them plant groves and set up images again. He yields. Describe: God's anger, prophets sent—their messages unheeded; growing idolatry, God's house neglected and forsaken by the very king who had built and restored it. [Write] "**Sin and sorrow.**" So he went from bad to worse, hardening his heart against God, till at last he sent bad men to stone the good high priest Zechariah [use second picture] close by the altar in God's own house—killed the son of the good uncle who guarded, crowned, and helped him all those years.

Now, sin always brings sorrow, and God soon sent the terrible punishment he deserved. A few Syrian soldiers easily

beat his big army, because God helped them ; then he had to send all his gold and treasure away to their king, and he was left sick and wounded on a bed of pain, his subjects all angry and discontented ; and then soon came the [write] "**horrible end.**" Two of his servants came to his room and murdered him in his bed, and nobody cared to punish them at the time, because he had lost the esteem of everyone, and all were glad he was gone. They would not bury him even among the kings, but put him away in a place by himself. How all the bright prospects of his youth were blighted ! How sad his end !

Apply : Some of us beginning so fairly, so hopefully, may even end like Joash, in darkness and disgrace. How can we be sure of not doing so ? Yes, (1) By constant prayer to God to keep us from sin, and to live by His Spirit in our hearts, making us to love holiness. (2) By remembering how weak we are, how easily we fall, and so keep from pride and self-trust and vain confidence. (3) By turning a deaf ear to the sinners who tempt us to evil. (4) By seeking the counsels of the good, and, most of all, of the gracious God who has promised to keep us in all our dangers and temptations.

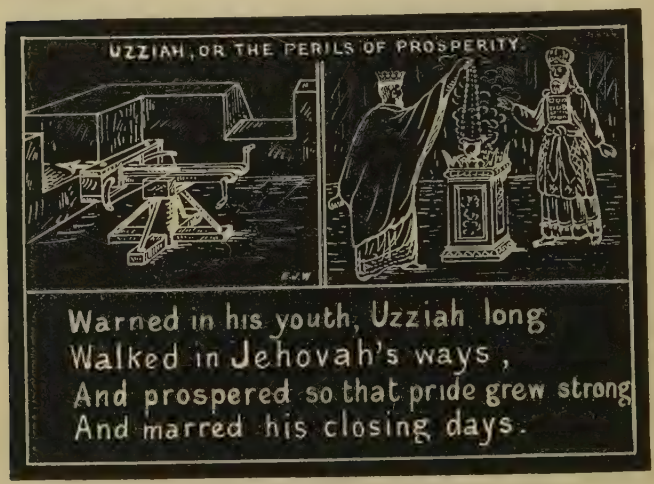
Review questions. Repeat divisions till known, and get from children in their own words the lessons taught.

VII

UZZIAH; OR, THE PERILS OF PROSPERITY

(2 Chron. 26)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I spake unto thee in thy prosperity; but thou saidst, I will not hear."—*Jer. 22 : 21.*


UZZIAH, OR THE PERILS OF PROSPERITY.
Warned in his youth, Uzziah long
Walked in Jehovah's ways,
And prospered so that pride grew strong
And marred his closing days.

THIS morning we are to look at another king; he had two names, Uzziah and Azariah. His father was a weak king, and he was the grandson of the poor king Joash we talked of last Sunday, who began so well and ended so badly.

Question: His faults, his death? etc. His father, too, was one who only half served God, and the evil in the end got the better of the good. He, too, was murdered.

Now let us remember this while we look at [write] "**Uzziah.**" He was [write] "**warned in his youth.**" Poor lad! Picture him when he saw the corpse of his murdered father lifted off the horses; then, after the funeral, good Zechariah comes to him and persuades him to turn to God and hear His messages. As he does so, God blesses him. He [write] "**walked in Jehovah's ways.**" [Read ver. 5.]

Let us write "**prospered,**" and now let us see what "prospered" means. First, he was a conquering king. [Read vers. 6, 7, 8.] See how many nations he conquered. Show from map how large his country grew. When a king's country gets bigger, people say he is prospering.

Then he was a wise king. [Read ver. 9.] He knew people could in those times only be safe and happy as they were secure from the cruel kings who "came down like the wolf on the fold," and robbed and murdered them. So he got large stores of arms, weapons for everyone, and then he was the first to invent and bring out "the artillery." [Read ver. 15.]

Use first picture, and describe ballistæ and catapults; show how they were the cannons of old time, and how, by and by, gunpowder took the place of the big bow-string. No wonder people got afraid of him. Read from ver. 5, "As long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper."

And then he was an "industrious king"; he loved husbandry. Describe towers, for herdmen to take refuge in and hold against robbers—wells, cisterns, much cattle, husbandmen, vine-dressers.

Then an industrious king will surely be a "rich king.' This was how he found much of the money for his great army and war-engines.

Then he was a "religious king"; he sought the Lord and heeded His servant.

How I wish we could leave off here! But he became a "proud king." All went so well with him, and for so many years — fifty-two — [write] "**long,**" he thought he needed no priest to go in to God for him, and so he took the censer himself and went right into the Holy Place, and stood by the little golden altar. Question about Tabernacle, priests, God's rule of worship.

Use second picture, [write] "**pride grew strong.**" Then read vers. 17–23. Picture scene. Tell of the great earthquake people never forgot, and which Josephus says happened while he was in the Temple. Then question about lepers and leprosy, and describe his terrible punishment and isolation, [write] "**and marred his closing days.**"

Apply: Often when we prosper and get rich, we get proud, and think we can do without our great High Priest the Lord Jesus, and that we can go to God, swinging the censers of our big subscriptions and good work for God and others. Then God shows us the leprosy of sin is in us, and that we cannot stand before Him—we can only offer ourselves, our service, and the sweet incense of our praise, through Jesus the great High Priest.

Review questions. Complete verse, sing, and memorise.

VIII

JOSIAH'S GOOD REIGN

(2 KINGS 22)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord."—*2 Kings 22 : 2.*

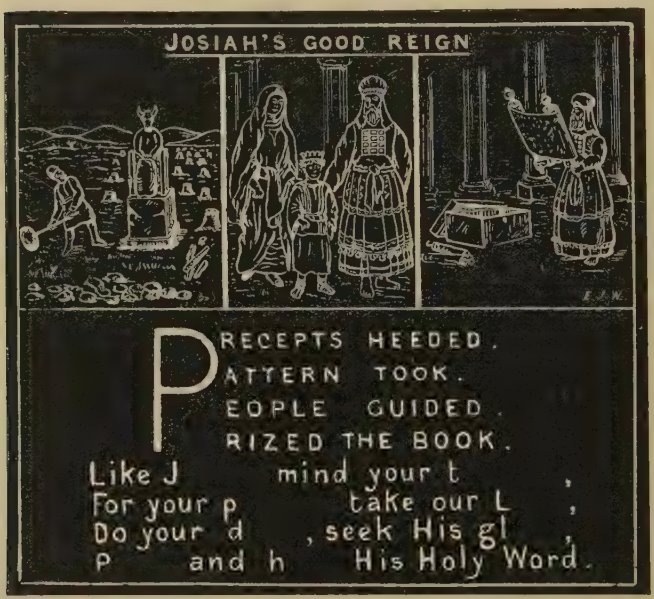
DID you ever before hear of a boy king? Yes, Joash (aged seven). Manasseh (aged twelve). In England? Yes, Edward VI., the good young king who loved his Bible. This morning we are to speak of another—Josiah, who was just eight when he began to reign. Stand up, Charlie; you're just eight, you know. There, a young king just about his style, and look, and size.

I have drawn a rough picture of him here. Who can these be on either side? Yes, one is his mother, Jedidah. I think she was a good woman, because, though his father Amon was such a bad man, she got him named Josiah, which means, "God is my supporter." And then this other dressed as a priest? Yes, Hilkiah, the good high priest.

A boy king wants friends like these. What young king was it had bad advisers? Yes, Manasseh. What a mercy young Josiah not only had these two good friends, but "**precepts heeded.**" That is our first thought about him. Just look at 2 Chron. 33. There we see, when he was sixteen, he sought the Lord with all his heart. The good lessons bore fruit. How happy he was, and how glad his two kind teachers were! Do you heed the precepts of your godly mother or kind teacher? Are you seeking the Lord with all your heart?

Then, next, we have "**pattern took.**" Most boys and girls

know someone they try to be like—boys, father; girls, mother, or, perhaps, teacher. Bad boy, who buys "penny dreadful," wants to take highwayman or pirate for his pattern. Now, whom did Josiah take? He could not take father or grandfather, they were such dreadfully bad men; but there was someone Jedidah used to tell him of, a brave shepherd boy, who killed


JOSIAH'S GOOD REIGN
RECEPTS HEEDED.
ATTERN TOOK.
EOPLE GUIDED.
RIZED THE BOOK.
Like J mind your t ,
For your p take our L ;
Do your d , seek His gl ,
P and h His Holy Word.

the giant, and the lion, and the bear, who was the first of all his kingly forefathers. Hilkiah sometimes, perhaps, chanted him one of the sweet hymns he wrote, "The Lord is my Shepherd." What was his name? Yes, David. Young Josiah said, "He shall be my pattern. I will serve and love God as he did." Now, could you take a better pattern? Yes, Jesus,

David's greater Son. Josiah never heard of Him. Look to Jesus ; say—

"Be Thou my Pattern ; make me bear
More of Thy gracious Image here."

Then, next, Josiah his "**people guided.**" An Eastern king can do anything he likes. No House of Commons there. Can lead the people rightly or wrongly, as he will. Josiah's people had been led far from God. When he reached twenty, he began to take away the idols, cut down the groves, break the images, clear the Temple. See this man in the picture, with his big maul in one of the high places, broken altar, stumps of trees, just going to knock ugly Baal over. Then, when he was twenty-six (2 Chron. 33 : 8), he set people to work to repair God's house—250 years since young Joash, the other good boy king, had put it to rights. Bad kings had pulled it about when they wanted stone or timber, and no one cared to put it in order. Josiah rebuilt it, and opened it with such a grand Passover feast. And then he taught his people God's Law. We are not kings, but God wants us to knock idols over—war, gambling, intemperance, covetousness—first in our own hearts, then in other people's. To build His house, to teach His Word.

Now, our last picture reminds us of our last heading, "**prized the book.**" While they were mending the Temple, good Hilkiah found a scroll of God's Law. There he is reading it. Told Shaphan the scribe. They read it to Josiah. It frightened him to think how wicked his people had been. He cried, rent his garments, sent to prophetess, then got all his people together to hear it all read, and hoped it would make them better. Yes, he did prize his little Bible. It had no more than the five first Books of Moses in it. Ours has sixty-six Books, and tells us all about Jesus, and heaven, and the Holy Spirit. Do we prize it and heed it as the young king did ?

Review questions.

Now let us fill up the verse at the head of the lesson. You fill in the blanks. If you are right, I will write them in red chalk ; if I have to tell you, I must make them white.

Now let us read it, and then sing it over (Tune : *Mariners*) till we know it.

"Like Josiah, mind your teachers,
For your pattern take our Lord ;
Do your duty, seek His glory,
Prize and heed His Holy Word."

IX

THE DOWNFALL OF JUDAH

(2 KINGS 24 : 17—25 : 12)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"It is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God."—*Jer. 2 : 19.*

THIS morning we come to the last sad tale of Judah's wrong-doing and punishment. Though long delayed, it came at last.

Question out: God's commands, Israel's disobedience, idolatry, Manasseh, kings before him, Temple defiled, people fearfully wicked, going on for two or three hundred years? Write in word "**rebellion.**" What is a rebel? When there are any, what must a good strong king do? What must God do? But He would not do this at once. For a long time He tried to save them from ruin by [write] "**remonstrance.**" How? In the reading of His law; by the words of His prophets; by lesser punishments to begin with. Let us think of some of the prophets He sent. Yes, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah. And now of some of the lesser punishments. Yes, Egyptians, smaller nations, famines, pestilences. Some of them led off to captivity first. Now, when God thus dealt with them there were two roads they could take. Let us draw them. First of all, they might refuse to listen, mock Him, and go on in [write] "**recklessness,**" like the drunken sailors rushing on a reef, or the drunkard who knows he is fast going to the grave. If they take this road, where will it lead them? Yes, to "**ruin.**" Let me

write these letters in red—Red Ruin. But the other road, what was that? Yes, "**repentance**," turning from their sins, seeking God, keeping His law, putting away idols. If they had taken that road, what would have happened? Yes, God would have

redeemed them from the power of their enemies; they would have had bright golden "**redemption.**" [We will write it in yellow.] How do we know this? Yes, Gideon, Midian, Hezekiah, Sennacherib, and Jehoshaphat. Well, now, which road did they take? Of that Red Ruin I want to tell you.

Describe Jerusalem—strong city; all country-people, frightened at the approach of Nebuchadnezzar's big army, came crowding into it. At last he comes; eighteen months' siege, towers, battering-rams, scaling ladders, fighting; then famine, less and less food, all sorts of nasty things eaten, finely dressed ladies picking over dunghills for any little scrap they can get, mothers killing and eating their own babies. Then pestilence, too many dead bodies to be buried, fearful stench, all hearts hard and hopeless. Then some want to yield, fight in streets with those who want to hold out. Then at last breach is made; horrors of sack, death-shrieks and violence everywhere. Then the king flies by night. What became of him? Who was he? Josiah's little boy, just about eleven years old—the dreadful day they brought home his slain father from Megiddo. Often warned—Jeremiah in Jerusalem all through siege. Told him from God what he had better do. He went on recklessly, and, like the land, was ruined. Crept out at night. Read children the prophecies: How he would thus escape, how he would see Nebuchadnezzar face to face as a prisoner, how he would be taken to Babylon, yet never see it. Now his ruin—taken on plains of Jordan—led two hundred miles to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah. Sees sons and nobles slain. Last sight he ever beheld. Then cruel king puts out his eyes, perhaps with his own spear. Then poor prisoner at Babylon till he dies. Show picture copied from Chaldean tablets. Then picture of traveller looking down from Olivet on ruins of Jerusalem. Sad tale, all "*Ruin.*"

Now apply: We are by nature rebels against God. Children's sins, children's idols. How God remonstrates with us. His Word, our parents, our teachers, our ministers, our consciences. Two ways open to us. Take golden road—repentance and redemption from self, and sin, and Satan—our Nebuchadnezzar—through Jesus our Saviour.

Review questions, then fill in verse—

"The land destroyed, the king a slave,
Israel with sorrow learns,
When God is mocked and long despised,
His anger fiercely burns.
Lord, help me warning hence to take,
And every sinful thought forsake."

Repeat and sing.

X

A SAVIOUR PROMISED

(Isa. 11 : 1-9)

(*Sunday before Christmas*)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given."—*Isa. 9 : 6.*

NEXT Wednesday will be—? And we call it Christmas Day because it was—? And in our lesson title our Lord, who was born that day, is called a—? What do we mean by a Saviour? Illustrate: Fireman and child; boatman and drowning boy; Havelock and Lucknow. And Jesus is called a Saviour because He saves His people from their—? Sins. Yes, their punishment and power.

Now, who can tell me how many people there were in the world when Christ was first promised? And their names were—? Who gave that first promise to Adam and Eve? Where did they live then? What had they just done? Can any boy repeat God's words of promise? Was that promise ever repeated? Yes, by whom? Remind of Moses, David, and now of Isaiah? Who was Isaiah? Where did he live? How long before Jesus was born? Yes, more than seven hundred years. Who was king then?

Now let us read first of all the Golden Text, and then ver. 1 of our lesson. In the latter, that Child and Son is spoken of as a rod or a branch. Look at my first picture. Did you ever, going through the woods, see an old stump, like that of a tree cut down, out of which a bright young branch or rod was shooting up? Well, Isaiah says that out of the stem or root of Jesse—cut down because of the sins of his house or family—there should by and by come the wondrous Child—the Saviour of the world.

Now, I expect you will think of my lesson as the asp lesson, from something I shall presently tell you, so I have put the three letters here, and I will use them for three heads, and so the first will be [write] "**A Saviour Promised.**"

But now think which of all the prophets tells us most about this coming Saviour? Yes, Isaiah helped the Jews to know what He would be like, what He would do, and what He would suffer, and why more than anyone else. If they had read and believed his words, they would never have crucified their Messiah. So let us read vers. 2 and 3 (first part), and then vers. 3 (second part), 4, and 5, and we shall see there the Saviour's portrait portrayed, or drawn, by Isaiah in words that help us almost to see Him seven hundred years before He came. What do they show us? One full of the Spirit of God, wise to teach, strong to heal and save, and quick to hear, and perfectly obedient to His Father in heaven. And then for us? One

who loves and pities the poor and weak; will take their part, and overthrow the wicked, their enemies; will be the faithful, righteous Friend of His people. Was not Jesus just like Isaiah's picture? Let us write our second head, "**A Saviour Portrayed.**"

But now let us read the rest of the lesson, vers. 6–9. What a beautiful picture! All nature at peace; fierce beasts tearing and killing no more; no roars of terror, no cries of pain. Explain: Wolf, lamb; leopard, kid; lion, calf; bear, cow, etc.

Then use second picture. A little fair child holding its pretty flower to the fangs of that deadly asp I told you I should show you. Describe asp. Serpent about five feet long. Poisonous bite, neck swelling with anger; swift, darting bite. But now, with Jesus King of all, this little child may play with it and all be well.

Now, did you ever see any such happy picture before? Yes, that beautiful Garden of Eden we call Paradise. How sorry we feel our first parents ever left it! Jesus the Saviour, born at Christmas, came to bring [write] "**A Second Paradise.**" A sweeter, fairer one than even Eden was.

Do you remember the story of the Fall? Through what creature was it Satan spoke? Yes. In the first Eden that serpent brought death and sorrow to poor Eve and Adam. But Jesus the Saviour has bruised its head; and now, in His own second Paradise, by the figure of Eve's little children playing all safely with even those dreadful serpents with whom her "seed have been so long at enmity," the prophet shows how peaceful and happy all will be when the knowledge of the Lord covers the earth, as the waters cover the great deep.

Apply: Next Wednesday, to-day, always, we must think of the dear Saviour so long promised who came to do all this. Is He our Saviour? Shall we serve Him in that second Paradise? Do we thank God for Him?

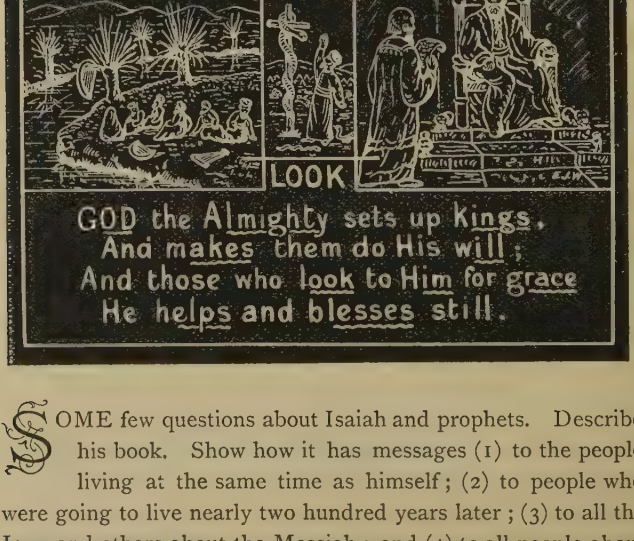
Review questions. Repeat heads. Sing lesson verse, "Thou Prince of Life, arise," etc.

XI

THE ONE LIVING AND TRUE GOD

(Isa. 45 : 11–25)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I am the first, and I am the last; and beside Me there is no God."—*Isa. 44 : 6.*


THE ONE LIVING AND TRUE GOD
LOOK
GOD the Almighty sets up kings,
And makes them do His will;
And those who look to Him for grace
He helps and blesses still.

SOME few questions about Isaiah and prophets. Describe his book. Show how it has messages (1) to the people living at the same time as himself; (2) to people who were going to live nearly two hundred years later; (3) to all the Jews and others about the Messiah; and (4) to all people about His growing kingdom and final glory.

Explain that our lesson is taken from the second group of prophecies, and was to tell the people who, nearly two hundred years after, would be captives in Babylon, about a great king whom God was going to raise up as their friend and deliverer; and which, further, contains many messages to cheer and help the great king in his wars and work. Then carefully explain what a wonderful prophecy this was. Nearly two hundred years before this king was born, God, by Isaiah, mentioned his very name—Cyrus, and told some strange things about him, which came out true to the letter.

Let us look for some of these. George, read ver. 3 in the chapter just before our lesson begins. What does God promise him there? Well, those treasures of darkness hidden in secret places were no less than £130,000,000 of money. Cyrus took these from the rich King Crœsus.

And now, Mary, read ver. 14—about Egyptian men of stature coming over to him. Well, in his great battle with Crœsus, thousands of brave Egyptian soldiers, who were the flower of the army of that rich king, came over to Cyrus, and were afterwards his bravest servants. Make the children see how wonderful such foretellings are, and how they prove the Bible to be God's Word.

Then, using first picture, describe captivity of Jews; harp on willow, weeping for the land of their birth and the Jerusalem they loved. How these words of Isaiah would come to cheer and comfort them! How they would talk of the coming Cyrus, and of their deliverance! And as news by and by came that Cyrus himself was coming with his great army, would they not feel that Jehovah, who could thus make kings and empires rise up to do His will, was the great and only God?

Now read vers. 15–21, and we shall see God wants His people thus to think of Him, and, putting Him beside the useless, helpless voiceless idols of wood and brass, to see how

foolish and wicked it was to think of any other god than the one great Jehovah as having any power to help and bless.

Then use third picture. Explain how good old Daniel, bald and aged, most likely showed the great King Cyrus how Jehovah had sent this prophecy about him nearly two centuries before his birth. With what wonder the king would read it. How he would feel towards the great God who had thus "called him by name," and set him up; and just as God said in our lesson, ver. 13, he built the city, and let go God's captives, not for price nor reward.

May not, then, our one great and true God invite everyone, even the poor captives right away in the very ends of the earth, to look to Him to be saved?

Read ver. 22. Use second picture of the brazen serpent. Explain salvation by a *look*. How simple is a look! Yet what a lot we can put into it—what love, what hatred, what faith!

Now, the look of faith saved the bitten Israelite. Just so to-day does that same look of faith, turned on the dying, rising Saviour, bring salvation to the poor sin-bitten one, and set the captive free. Let us all repeat what Jesus said about it to Nicodemus, "As Moses," etc. Then let us add on our ver. 22 and say them together, and, reading vers. 23–25, rejoice that by and by all will own the righteousness and power of God, while all the seed of Israel (God's believing ones) will be justified, and shall glory.

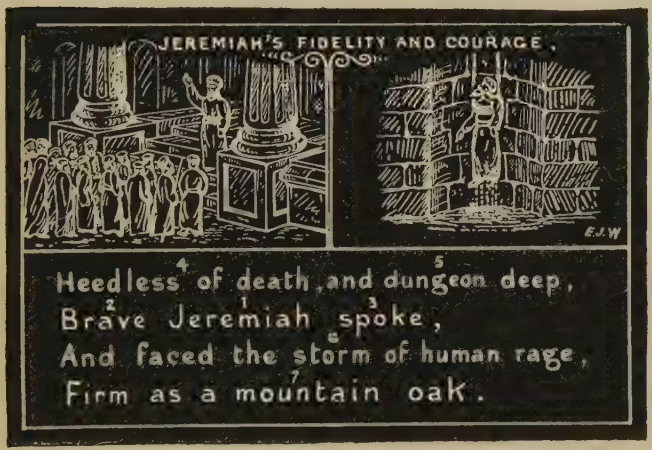
Review questions. Fill in, sing, and memorise verse.

XII

JEREMIAH'S FIDELITY AND COURAGE

(JER. 26 : 8-24)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee."
—*Jer. 1 : 19.*


JEREMIAH'S FIDELITY AND COURAGE.
E.J.W
Heedless of death, and dungeon deep,
Brave Jeremiah spoke,
And faced the storm of human rage,
Firm as a mountain oak.

WE have a long name and some long words in the title of this morning's portrait.

Let us write the long name, "**Jeremiah**," first, and then see what the long words mean : fidelity, another word for faithful—trusty, true. Illustrate : Faithful servant, faithful collie lying on dead shepherd's grave. Courage, boldness of

heart, making us cool and brave in danger. Now let us see where Jeremiah showed himself faithful and brave.

Describe or question : Son of priest, not of soldier, born in country village, very feeling, tender lad, called by God to take His message of anger and judgment to the great city and the great people in Jerusalem.

Illustrate : Lame Kentish farmer, unable to move, sees a lot of London roughs, with sticks and dogs, robbing his strawberry field. Tells his little boy to go and warn them off, and say he will fetch the police. Boy half afraid to speak to them, yet goes, in spite of dogs and sticks and curses. That boy was [write] "**brave,**" and did work something like Jeremiah's. What danger had Jeremiah to face?

Describe message. Jerusalem was to be like Shiloh, where the Tabernacle once had stood—now all ruined and desolate. Judæa to be laid waste. Well [use first picture], brave Jeremiah [write] "**spoke**" all these words of warning in the Temple. Soon crowd of angry people laid hold of him, and said he should die for telling such lies, and trying to frighten them so. Princes come along just in time. [Read vers. 10–16.] They see God had sent him, save his life, and then some of the good elders tried to get the people to listen and repent.

Read vers. 14 and 15, and show how Jeremiah was ready to die, if doing his duty should bring him death. [Write] "**Heedless of death.**" Then go on with Jeremiah's history. Tell of siege, its brief raising; God's messages about Babylonians' return; their triumph; his advice to make peace; the Jews' anger; how they put Jeremiah in dungeon [use second picture, write] "**and dungeon deep,**" darkness, dampness, vermin, short fare, sickness. Then tell of Ebed-Melech, kind black man, looking down, dropping down old rotten rags for Jeremiah to put between the rope and his armpits, that he might draw him up and not hurt him. Talks with king; more prison. Fall of

Jerusalem. How God made Nebuchadnezzar kind to His good servant Jeremiah.

Here we have the story of a brave man, who, though by nature timid, stood his ground and did his duty, believed God's word [repeat all together Golden Text], and so God delivered him. Often angry, cursing crowds pushed towards him and round him, but he stood like an oak against the storm. [Write last two lines of verse.]

But our story tells us of another of God's servants—Uriah, who was not brave, who did not stand and trust; but ran away, and perished even after he had escaped.

Can we think of anyone braver even than Jeremiah? Yes, the good, gentle Lord Jesus. The Son who came to the wicked husbandmen after all the servants had been driven away or slain, and could hear them, long before He came, saying, "This is the heir, come let us kill Him."

Apply: Boys and girls need this holy courage. God may not want them always to be speaking for Him, but He wants them to live for Jesus, and live like Jesus. Often this will bring trouble, but we must be brave like Jesus, like Jeremiah, and the holy martyrs, and we shall then be able to read our Golden Text, and say, "God means that for me."

Review questions. Sing, and memorise verse.

XIII

THE CAPTIVES IN BABYLON

(Dan. 1)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much."—*Luke 16 : 10.*

WHAT is a captive? One taken either as a prisoner or a slave. Here, in our picture, we see four all bound together, marching between two soldiers on a long and weary journey of more than a month—of more than five hundred miles—from their own city to a new country. Who are these? Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. What were they? Well-born young Jews, who had been brought up at Jerusalem. And the soldiers are—? Chaldeans. And their king—? The great and cruel Nebuchadnezzar. He has just been to Jerusalem ; and as God's people had sinned and grieved Him, He left them in his power. He had taken their king and loaded him with chains, intending to carry him to Babylon, but at the last moment he took them all off again, put him back on his throne, and, instead, took away many of the chief people and their children. Among them were these four good lads, about sixteen years old. What a weary walk they had, what fears, what sad thoughts ! Can you think of any other good lad in the Bible who had such another journey over the desert to a strange land? Joseph. You remember he became prime minister to the king Pharaoh ; and is it not strange one of these four will, by and by, become prime minister to the king of Babylon?

It is of him I want to talk to you. Let me write down his name—"**Daniel.**" It means, "God is my Judge." Now, I am glad to say, he not only bore a good name, but he was—let me

write it—a "**decided**" servant of God. He is going among heathen—among false gods; what a good thing his heart is fixed! Soon he will be greatly tried. When they reach Babylon they are taken into the palace, told they are to be

trained to serve the king Nebuchadnezzar in high places, to be fed on his meals, to drink his wine, to bear new names he will give them. How nice! most of you would say. Why, it was worth a five hundred miles' walk to get to such a time as that. But Daniel knew no good Jew could dare eat the king's meat, some unclean, some not killed as God ordered, some offered first to idols. He dared not defile himself. And then the wine? He knew the king's strong drink would inflame him, hurt his health, destroy his brain, and lead him into sin. So he made up his mind not to touch it; and this would be "**denying self.**" [Write it.] But he saw there was danger in this. Perhaps the steward who takes care of them will tell the king, he will be angry, and they will be slain. But "when a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

Ashpenaz loved the bright, noble boy. He feared at first, if he let him have that plate of red lentil porridge I have drawn here (*above*) instead of the king's meat, he would get thin, and then Nebuchadnezzar would find it out and kill him. But Daniel begged a ten-days' trial. He was "**daring**" enough to believe he would then look better rather than worse. And so it was; plain fare and pure water proved the best diet after all. Such rosy cheeks, such healthy faces, such well-learned lessons, such strength in games! Those young abstainers carried all before them. By and by, when three years had passed, they were taken — a great many more from other lands with them — to the king. Who was that answered his first question so splendidly? Young Daniel. Those four Jews, who have feared God and kept His commandments, are now "**distinguished**" (let us write it) by being chosen of all the party to attend the king, and talk with him, and stand before him, as I have them here in our last picture. Now, I expect you want to be distinguished

too. Well, then, like Daniel, you must be decided for God; deny self, dare to do right, love and trust the Lord Jesus; and then, though you may never stand before an earthly king, you will by and by, through Christ, have a place given you by the throne of the great King of kings and Lord of lords.

Review questions.

Then fill up verse blanks, read, sing, and commit to memory—

"O Lord, like Daniel, make me stand,
Fearless and bold for Thee;
Shunning the snares on every hand,
Which Satan spreads for me."

XIV

PRIDE AND ITS PUNISHMENT

(Dan. 4 : 24–37)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Those that walk in pride He is able to abase."— *Dan. 4 : 37.*

WHAT is pride? "New suit, teacher." Well, no, not quite that, though a boy is often proud of it, or of his skill at football, or his knowledge; while a girl is often proud of her home, and friends, and beauty. Those are ways it shows out. Pride itself is thinking too little of God and other people, and too much of yourself. Who would be most likely to do this? Well, yes, perhaps kings would be, though many poor people are very proud too.

Well, this morning we are going to talk of a proud king, who was punished, and learned to be humble.

Connecting questions. What great king have we been talking about the last two or three Sundays? What country did he rule? Any more? Every country in the world that had many people and big cities in it—Syria, Palestine, Egypt, all called him king. Everywhere people feared him. He had [write] "**boundless power.**" No one could stand against him. He conquered all the other kings, and made them obey him, and pay him tribute. And as he had all the money and all the people, he made his own Babylon such a splendid city. Such high walls, so many gates. Waters led all round it by great embankments he had built. Such grand and mighty temples,

and such [write] "**beautiful palaces.**" He liked to look at all these, and say, "I built them all for my glory, and to show my power. What a great and glorious king I am!" In the midst of all this pride, one night he had a dream. Use pictures and

describe: Big tree, birds, beasts, men. Angel watchers cut it down. Stump left. Iron and brass bands round it. King felt sure it was a dream from God. Wise men called, then Daniel. He hears it, looks up to God; and then, seeing meaning, turns pale, and fears to tell the king. Nebuchadnezzar sees this;

tells him not to be afraid, but tell him the worst. And then Daniel told him what it meant. He was the big tree. God was going to bring him low, cut him down for a time, till he should learn how weak he was, and how great was the Most High. He would go mad. Fancy himself an ox, eat grass, lose his throne and power for seven years. Yes, it [write] "**banishment predicted,**" foretold how he would be turned out from his lovely home, amongst the beasts. And then, like a true friend, we see Daniel begging the king to turn from his bad ways, and do righteously and well, and perhaps God would give him pardon and peace. Very likely he did better for a time. But just a year after he was on his palace roof, and, looking at the beautiful city, his old proud thoughts came over him worse than ever, and he said, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built?" Oh, what [write] "**boastful pride**"! Just as he said it, a dreadful judgment whisper seemed to come from heaven into his ear and heart, telling him the strange dream had come true; his reason was gone, his kingly glory all taken away. Now, all he wanted was to be on all-fours among the grass, eating like the ox he thought himself. Now he was filled with "**beast-like passions.**" He raged and rushed at people. Kind Daniel and Evil-Merodach, his faithful son, put him in some park corner where no one would see him, and there the poor king bellowed and ate his grass, with the heavy dew falling round him, till his hair became like eagles' feathers, and his long nails, no one dared cut, like birds' claws. But good Daniel and the king's son took care of his kingdom for him, and guarded the stump and roots with iron and brass.

And now the seven years are over. How Daniel and his son are watching him! They have brought beautiful robes to throw over him directly he comes to. Look! watch! For the first time in all the seven years he looks away from his grass up

to heaven. Look, his eyes are calm and clear. He kneels up, tries to clasp his hands as well as the long nail claws will let him. Hark! he speaks. He's praying to the great God of heaven. His friends run in to him. Clothed, and in his right mind, they lead him back to his throne and lords, and he is king again. But all the pride is gone. He shows [write] "**becoming penitence.**" Writes the proclamation. A king's letter we have given us here. Let us read what he says [vers. 34–37].

Apply: See how God hates and punishes pride. Bible full of texts about it. Tell me some.

Why does God hate it? Because it keeps so many out of heaven. Too proud to see their sin and weakness, too proud to come to Jesus to be saved all by His precious blood. Let us ask Him to cast out our pride and keep us humble.

Review questions.

Now let us fill up, repeat, and sing our verse:—

"Earth's greatest king see swiftly pass
From palace home to dew-filled grass,
Till, pride all conquered, he shall own
The God who placed him on his throne."

XV

THE DEN OF LIONS

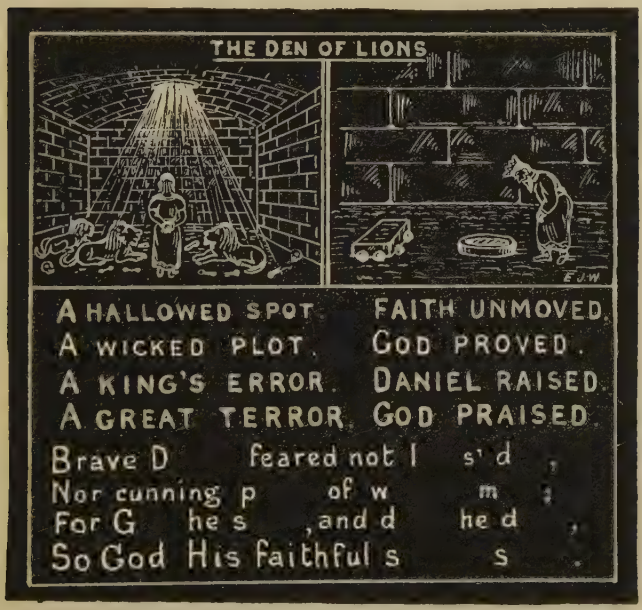
(Dan. 6 : 10–23)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"No manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God."—*Dan. 6 : 23.*

CONNECTING questions. What had Daniel been made? Did he ever act as third ruler for Belshazzar? Why not?

Well, in that horrible night of death and slaughter, he was not only spared, but the new king made the brave old man chief of his rulers. God has not forgotten him, nor has he forgotten God. Three times a day he prays to Him. He has [write] "**a hallowed spot**" in his home, where, with window open, looking away west to his fathers' Temple and city, he pleads with God. If I went home with you, could you show me your hallowed spot, where you pray, all alone with God? I hope you could. But the Persian rulers were soon jealous of this Jew stranger, and so they formed [write] "**a wicked plot**" to get rid of him. He never stole, he never spoke against the king, nor neglected his work; so they knew they could only get him into trouble about his religion. So they persuaded the king to make a new law, that for thirty days no one should pray to anyone but to him. If they did, they should be thrown to the lions in their den. And so here we see [write] "**a king's error.**" Foolish man! soon he would have given almost anything if he could only have made it "No" instead of "Yes." Any simpleton can say "Yes." It often takes a very brave,

strong man to say "No." Boys and girls, learn to say it. It will save you from such errors. But the king's law is put about. People read it. All are in [write] "**a great terror.**" Those dreadful lions. They will, of course, take care not to make a meal for them. All leave off their usual prayers. All save Daniel. He sees the law, reads it, knows the king cannot


THE DEN OF LIONS
A HALLOWED SPOT
A WICKED PLOT.
A KING'S ERROR.
A GREAT TERROR.
FAITH UNMOVED.
GOD PROVED.
DANIEL RAISED.
GOD PRAISED.
Brave D feared not l s' d ,
Nor cunning p of w m ;
For G he s ,and d he d ,
So God His faithful s s .

alter it. What will he do? Satan comes whispering, "Ask for a month's holiday, and go away. Whisper your prayers in your heart, where only God can hear them. Don't go near your prayer chamber. Pray before you get out of bed and after you get in. It will be quite as well, you know." But Daniel was a man of "**faith**" [write]. He knew how his three friends

braved the fiery furnace, and shall he fear the lions? No; he just goes on as before. He is [write] "**unmoved.**" His enemies catch him praying. They go to the king. Unlike Nebuchadnezzar, he is mad with himself, not Daniel. How could he have let that wicked plot succeed? Why did he not say "No"? But he will not have it; he will find a way out; so he tries till sunset. Now, those Medes had a funny law, that when a king made a law not even he could change it again. That was to make him careful; to make him think before he did it. When they reminded him of this he had to give up trying. So Daniel is brought, hands tied, and then is led off to the den. As he leaves, the poor, broken-hearted king says, "Thy God whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee." Darius and Daniel both are looking to Him for deliverance.

Now we shall see [write] "**God proved.**" They take away the stone. Daniel looks down, sees the glaring eyes and the white shining teeth; hears the growls, and sees the struggling beasts below. The rope is round him, they lower him down [use first picture], put on the stone, seal it that none may move it to help him, and go away. The poor king cannot eat. Away with the music. Cannot listen to it to-night. His heart is full. Shall he ever see his good, true servant again? He tosses about all night. Now the first grey streak of dawn has come. See, the king has put on his robe. He steals away to the lions' den, goes to the grating, calls, "O Daniel, has your God saved you from the lions?" He hears a voice [use second picture], "O king, live for ever. My God has sent His angel and stopped the lions' mouths." Down in the dim light he sees Daniel's dear old face looking up at him. Away he rushes; his servants come; stone is removed; and [write] "**Daniel raised.**" King leads him to the palace, and by them both [write] "**God is praised.**"

I wonder if Daniel told him much about that wonderful

night. Look at my picture. I have drawn Daniel, with his grey hairs and bald head, and the lions; and the den, but there was one thing I could not draw. What was that? No, I could not draw that angel. But Daniel saw him. Perhaps the very same angel that walked with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace. I expect he was the first object he saw as that stone slid over, and when he saw him the lions all looked like kittens, nothing more. What a night he had with that angel! What talk—what joy! What missionaries those four faithful young Jews have proved for Jehovah! Kings, princes, peoples have, through them, all heard of Him.

Apply: Now, can you dare to be a Daniel? Be true to God when lions are about. Trust Him in all danger. His angels still are living—His children still are saved.

Review questions.

Fill in blanks in verse; read, sing, and memorise—

"Brave Daniel feared not lions' den,
Nor cunning plots of wicked men;
For God he stood, and death he dared,
So God His faithful servant spared."

XVI

JONAH, THE DISCONTENTED PROPHET

(JONAH 4)

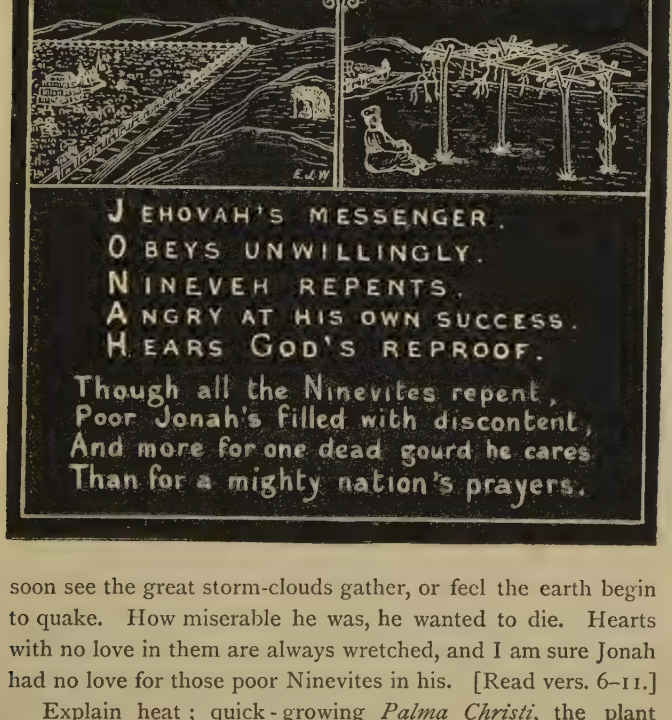
GOLDEN TEXT.—"Godliness with contentment is great gain."— *1 Tim. 6 : 6.*

OUR page to-day opens on a man who was God's first foreign missionary, [write] "**Jehovah's messenger**" to a heathen people. Describe Nineveh, its size, population, the power and cruelty of its kings. Then speak of God's anger, His message, summons to Jonah; his dislike for the duty, flight; the voyage, storm, miracle, deliverance. God's second command; Jonah dares not disobey, but the duty is so distasteful. He [write] "**obeys unwillingly.**"

Picture arrival at the great city. His walk down the middle of one of its broad streets, his strange cry, people stopping. Who sent you? Taken to king. His message, king's fears; his commandments, hope of mercy, repentance of the people. [Write] "**Nineveh repents,**" and God, so ready to forgive, repents of the threatened evil, and listens to their prayers, and spares them. Ought not this to have made the missionary happy? His message has turned the big city right round to God. But see, he is [write] "**angry at his own success.**" He fancies all the people will think him a false prophet, and he would rather see them all destroyed than have a finger pointed at himself as one whose message did not come true; and so he frets, and is angry and discontented; and now, here in our

lesson, we see how wisely God reproved and taught His foolish servant, who dared to complain against His mercy. [Read vers. 1–5.]

Use first picture, and show Jonah on the hill under the little booth, looking down at the great city, almost hoping, I am afraid, that God would change His mind, and that he would


JONAH, THE DISCONTENTED PROPHET.
JEHOVAH'S MESSENGER.
OBEYS UNWILLINGLY.
NINEVEH REPENTS.
ANGRY AT HIS OWN SUCCESS.
HEARS GOD'S REPROOF.
Though all the Ninevites repent,
Poor Jonah's filled with discontent,
And more for one dead gourd he cares
Than for a mighty nation's prayers.

soon see the great storm-clouds gather, or feel the earth begin to quake. How miserable he was, he wanted to die. Hearts with no love in them are always wretched, and I am sure Jonah had no love for those poor Ninevites in his. [Read vers. 6–11.]

Explain heat; quick-growing *Palma Christi*, the plant called gourd; how God made it grow in a night, sweetly

shading the prophet's little booth on the sunny hill. Jonah's delight and comfort. How he loved the plant for the soft green shelter it gave him.

Picture the next morning. His "awakening to find the work" that worm had done. His beautiful gourd, just as we have drawn it in this second picture, all withered and gone. There he sits, more angry and discontented than ever, wishing even that he might die, for the scorching east wind seems trying to drive him from his sulking-place down amongst those poor Ninevites God had spared, and whom he should have loved and taught. And then show how he [write] "**hears God's reproof.**" What was it? You are sorry and broken-hearted because your green gourd of yesterday, killed by that worm, is hanging there to-day, all dead and parched. You would have spared it if you could. And how do you think I, the loving Father, would feel, if that fair city down there, which the cruel worm of sin has been gnawing, were all lying in heaps of rubbish, with all its half-million of people, 120,000 of whom are little children, and all the poor cattle slain and dead.

Apply: (1) Delight in God's mercy, not in seeing bad people punished. Always be godly, agreeing with God, delighting in His ways, and then you will be contented, and so very happy. (2) These Ninevites repented at the preaching of this poor Jonah; how much more should we repent when the Greater than Jonah, the dear Lord Jesus, who wooed us and died for us, bids us do so.

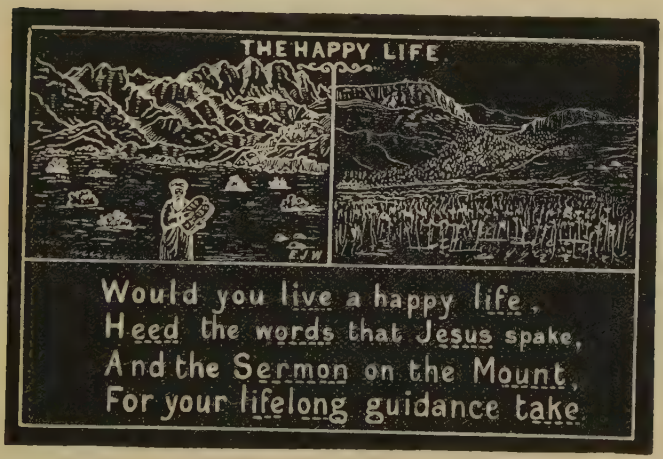
Review questions. Fill in verse, sing, and memorise.

XVII

THE HAPPY LIFE—(I)

(MATT. 5: 1-6)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life."—*Rev. 22: 14.*


THE HAPPY LIFE
Would you live a happy life,
Heed the words that Jesus spake,
And the Sermon on the Mount,
For your lifelong guidance take.

DRAW Mount Sinai in red; show a few green bushes on the desert plain in front—Moses right in the foreground in white. Draw the Horns of Hattin in green, while a crowd of little white strokes, with here and there a red or blue, will represent the crowd flocking up the mountain-side, and standing thickly at the top.

To-day we commence a new quarter. We have closed our Book of Portraits, and now we open the life of our Lord that Matthew wrote, on purpose to find some of the beautiful lessons Jesus the Great Teacher taught us, so that we may be wise and happy.

Our first lesson is to show us how we may live a happy life. Quote birthday wishes, "Many happy returns." This, which we wish each other, Jesus came to give us. Do you know anyone who is living an unhappy life, whose face is always sad; anyone living a happy life, whose life is always glad? Which would you rather be like? This morning Christ is going to tell us how to live and be happy.

Refer to pictures. Two mountains—a red and a green. The first Sinai, the mountain of the Law and Moses, of the dark clouds, the lightnings, the great voice, the terrible God. Everyone kept far away. The second, the green "Horns of Hattin," the smiling hill of grass and flowers, with Jesus at the top, the God of Sinai, in His Son. Everyone coming near. Speaking not the terrors of His law, but the blessings of His gospel. Then show both mountains were meant to give people a happy life. That those who tried to keep the law of Sinai were happy, as they kept it. Only everyone broke it somewhere; all sinned and came short of the glory of God. But on the green gospel mountain Jesus sits. He has picked up the broken pieces at Sinai, put them together, kept all that was on them, made the law honourable, and then, presently, He will give this perfect life of His a sacrifice for us, that, pardoned and cleansed, we may be what, in His eight sweet blessings, He shows us we can be—subjects of His kingdom of love, joy, and faith.

Now, of the eight new blessings Jesus put on His two tables, we are going to look at four this morning. Let us read these

six verses— boys first, then girls—then close books and repeat them all together. Now, which is the first blessing, or way to be happy? Yes, poor in spirit. Illustrate: Pharisee and publican. Publican forgiven and justified goes to his home a happy man, because he was poor in spirit.

Now, the promised blessing. Proud-spirited people rule on earth, the poor in spirit will rule in heaven—its kingdom and glory will be theirs. The second blessing is on those who mourn. Illustrate: Mourners sad, speak of some recent funeral and the weeping friends. By and by, perhaps, they will see God did all well; they will be comforted, be strong in Him. But what other kind of mourning was Jesus thinking of? Yes, mourning for sin. Illustrate: Poor, sinful woman washing His feet with tears, wiping them with her hair. How she was comforted—"Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee."

Then the third blessing is to the meek! We should think quiet, meek folks would be pushed out of everything. Jesus says they shall inherit the earth, get everything somehow. Illustrate: David in cave with Saul's skirt, so meek and patient, yet he gets the kingdom and inherits the earth.

And then last for this morning. Blessed are the hungry and thirsty for righteousness. What does that mean? Yes, those who want to be right and do right themselves, and see others all righteous too, that God may be pleased with everything and everybody. Illustrate: David—ask for verses from Psalms, showing how he wanted to be righteous, and how God filled his heart with happiness and blessing.

Apply: This morning we have seen how to be happy. Who will try Jesus Christ's medicine? What are the four ingredients or things in it? Next Sunday we shall talk of four more. Let us remember them, and pray that Jesus may make each dear young heart an eight-sided lantern, showing all thes

graces, through which His Spirit shall clearly shine. Then repeat and apply Golden Text. Happy life in heaven. Right to the Tree of Life.

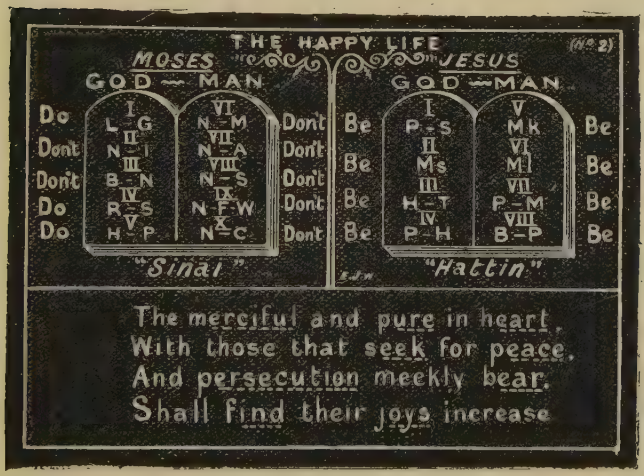
Review questions, let children fill up, sing, and memorise verse.

XVIII

THE HAPPY LIFE—(II)

(MATT. 5 : 7–12)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"If ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye."—*1 Pet. 3 : 14*



USE last Sunday's sketch of the two mountains, Sinai and the Horns of Hattin.

Write "Moses" in yellow, to remind of the fire and lightning of the Law-giving; "Jesus" in pink and white, to remind of the Word made flesh dwelling among us.

Instead of reading the short passage, encourage the whole school to repeat it from memory. Then ask for the four Beatitudes dealt with in our last lesson. Get them counted, eight altogether.

Introduce: Could we open an office in the High Street with a notice, "All people made happy here for life," how many calls and inquiries we should have! Boys and girls would clear out their money-boxes to pay the fees, and how they would read and treasure the paper given them with the rules they were to keep!

Now, on last week's pictures we see two places where people might be taught the way to happy lives. Without paying anything, we can read on this morning's board God's great prescription given at the red awful mountain of Sinai. I have put each Commandment in two letters, and as I point to them I want you to remember them and tell me what they stand for. Yes, "Love God," "No Idols," "Blaspheme not," "Remember the Sabbath," "Honour Parents," "No Murder," "No Adultery," "No Stealing," "No False Witness," "No Coveting."

Then please see they are on two tables—our duty to God and our parents make the five on the first. Another five, that tell our duty to man, are on the second. Look again, and you will see there are three "do's" and seven "don'ts." Love God and honour parents, and all the rest forbid the sins we so easily yield to.

Now, Jesus told the young ruler, if he wanted a happy, endless life, he must keep these commandments. How did he go away when he saw how hard it was fully to obey them? Yes, Jesus was the only one who obeyed the law and made it honourable. Sinai, after all, is not the place where we can find the happy life.

But let us look at it alongside this other hill—Hattin—where Jesus sits with the great crowd all round Him. Let us

look at Jesus Christ's eight "be's." I have put one or two letters to help you remember them. Let us read them: Be "Poor in spirit," "Mourners," "Hungry and thirsty for righteousness," "Pure in heart" (those are on Jesus' duty to God table). Then be "Meek," "Merciful," "Peacemakers," "Bearers of persecution" (those are on Jesus' duty to man table).

Explain this morning's four:—"Merciful." Illustrate: Forgiven steward, hard on fellow-servant, sent to prison by his lord. See it is opposite "Mourners." Remember all who truly mourn their own sins will be very merciful to other sinners. Then "Pure in heart." Illustrate: Adam saw God till his heart was sinful. The second Adam, Jesus, was the only one who always saw His Father; Enoch, perhaps, came next. But Jesus, when the Holy Spirit makes the heart clean and pure, will, with His Father, come and live in it. So we may see God. Then be "Peacemakers." Illustrate: Abigail, Blastus, the boy at school who always tries to stop fights, and make his mates friends again. And chiefest of all, Jesus, the great Peacemaker, who makes our peace for us with His Father? Then "Bear persecution." How can that make us happy? Illustrate: Stephen with the angel face. Paul and Silas singing praises in the inner prison.

But now look round these Hattin tables. I have eight "Be's"—not "Do's," or "Don'ts"; but Jesus knew, if the heart was right, and had these eight graces in it, all the "don'ts" of Sinai would be changed into "won'ts." The "pure in heart" *won't* want idols or commit adultery. The "merciful" *won't* murder or bear false witness, etc.

So now we have gone to Jesus on the mountain, and have learned from Him how we may be happy right through life.

But some dear child says, "Why, teacher, is it not harder to be good inside than to keep right outside?" Yes, if there

were no Jesus—no Holy Spirit—no prayer. But if we obey Jesus, and trust Him for holiness, we may even be all He bids us, and God's Holy Word will cleanse and teach us.

Apply: Who wants to be happy? Jesus Christ's is the only way.

Review questions. Fill in verse, memorise, sing.

XIX

THE LORD'S PRAYER

(MATT. 6 : 9–15)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."—*Matt. 7 : 7.*

[*This Plan has been worked out in Colours, and forms the Frontispiece to this work.*]

TO-DAY we are to speak about praying.

Now, we find Jesus giving a little pattern to help us put our thoughts and words in order when we come to God. Let us repeat that prayer all together.

To whom is it spoken? How do we address God? Why should we call Him Father? Yes, our earthly fathers love us most, help us most, guard us most, will the most kindly and patiently listen to us.

But here the Christian child is taught by Jesus that we have two fathers. Another far more loving, and powerful, and good, more able and more willing to hear us. Where is He? But how far away that is! Can He really hear and help me?

Describe the telephone; how it helps us speak with friends far away. God needs no telephone. He hears whenever one of His children thinks or speaks a prayer to Him. You can try this, and if you trust and love Him, and go to Him through Jesus, you will find what many a happy Christian child has found, that you can have real times with God. When taking His Holy Word, and going to Him with it, He can make it speak out to you, and cheer you, and teach you just as though you were before His throne, and He was having real speech with you. His Holy Spirit speaks in us, and fills our thoughts with God's thoughts, till we both think alike; and as thinking leads to doing, we get up from our prayer-time to go out and do just what God wants done by us.

But now let us go on and see what we are to ask for. First hear me say the prayer, and then you please count how many things we ask for:—Hallowed be Thy name (one), Thy kingdom come (two), Thy will be done on earth as in heaven (three), Give us this day our daily bread (four), Forgive us our trespasses (five), Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from Satan the Evil One (six).

Now, at Sinai and Hattin we saw there were God's table and man's table. So here half these little prayers are for things we want God to take for Himself, and the other half for things we want Him to give us.

First, we ask God to take "**glory**" [write] to Himself, that

all may love and reverence Him, and speak well of His name. We like folks to feel like that towards our earthly fathers. How angry a little boy would make you who spoke ill of father! So we want all to love and honour our Heavenly Father, and we ask for that the very first of all. Then we want Him to have more [write] "**power.**" How pleased we are when our Queen gets a new country to rule over—when her kingdom comes! How much more we ought to pray that God's may come, that India, China, Africa, all the world may call God their King, and Jesus their Prince of Peace. And then we ask, thirdly, for [write] "**obedience.**" In our Queen's big kingdom there are sometimes rebel subjects, and she sends her soldiers to overcome them. We want no rebels in our Father's kingdom. We want earth to be just like heaven. If you could go there, you would see no policemen angels, no soldier angels, no magistrate angels, not one. Why? Because no one ever does anything that God would not be pleased with. That's what we pray may come down here.

Now, please, watch. We asked for these things first. We must think of God before we think of self. We were made for His glory. We are His—Master first, servant after. But then we may go on, Jesus says, to ask "for self." First, [write] "**food.**" Our daily bread—all we want to make life happy—just for our own little share; fresh and fresh, just a day at a time, because our Father will never be out of the way. He will give it us. Illustrate: Israel, manna, George Muller's orphans, etc. Then we want [write] "**forgiveness.**" Yes, directly we get near God we feel that. How big and black our sins look! But for Christ's sake, if we forgive others, God will forgive us. And, lastly, we want [write] "**guidance.**" How many fall into temptation, into the hands of the Evil One! Only God can keep us. Illustrate: Israel, cloudy pillar, Peter. So that is the Lord's Prayer.

Now please read my Golden Text round these little pictures. [Use them.] I am afraid that proud Pharisee will not give this poor woman anything. But God will never send you away empty. This poor lady may not find her lost jewel, but you will find every blessing you seek that God sees will do you good. And then, if you knock at God's door, you will never have to go away and say, "There was no one at home. I knocked till I was tired, and had to come away." See, I have drawn a little child knocking at this door. He cannot reach the knocker, but God always hears the little knuckle-taps, and those that call early, that seek Him early, shall find Him.

Apply: Who now will begin to pray, to go to God with little prayers like these? Point to the promised blessings in the Golden Text. Illustrate: Answers — Hannah, David, Jonah.

Review questions. Sing lesson verse—

"Teach us, O Lord, to pray aright,
With reverence and with fear:
Though dust and ashes in Thy sight,
We may, we must draw near."

XX

PARABLE OF THE TARES

(MATT. 13 : 24-30, 36-43)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."—*Matt. 13 : 30.*

PARABLE OF THE TARES
Till the harvest, here below,
Wheat and tares together grow,
Then the reapers shall return,
Wheat they'll gather, tares they'll burn.

OUR title this morning has a long word in it. Who knows what "parable" means? Yes, that is what you always tell me, "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning." That will do. A little likely story with a moral. A fable is a little unlikely story with a moral.

Who was very fond of telling parables? Why? Can you remember any of them? Any other about sowing? Yes; I see you recollect about those four soils. What kinds of heart did Jesus mean by them?

Now, this morning we are to have a story in which we shall see two sowers sowing two seeds, each the very opposite of the other. Now let us read vers. 24–26.

Describe: A good man had a field—his own, where no one else had any right to come. He sowed it with good seed. Speak of care as to seed. Seed merchant, with his magnifying glass, looking at sample to see if he can find any little weed seeds hidden away in it. If he find them, he will not buy it or sell it. So this good farmer sowed only good seed in his field. He knew it was so, and so did his servants.

But our farmer in Christ's story had something beside his field and his good seed. He had an enemy. What is that? Yes, one who hated him and wanted to do him hurt. Now, look at my first picture, and see how the wicked, cunning fellow managed it. Here he is in the night-time, only a little moonlight, when the farmer is fast asleep, creeping along under the wall, throwing something like dust over it. What is all this? Yes, he has got a lot of weed seeds, and he is throwing them all over the field where the farmer had just put in his good seed. What a cruel trick! How we wish the good farmer could just wake up and catch him!

But soon the trick is found out. The good man's servants soon come and tell him. Describe them walking over the field, now getting quite green all over. What are these funny leaves among all the little upright blades? Why, I do think they must be darnel, or tares. Let us go and tell master. Ah! he knows in a moment. He says, "An enemy has done this." [Read vers. 27–30.]

The servants want to know what they shall do. "May we go in right away and pull them all up?" "No," says the master, "or else you'll pull up a lot of my growing wheat too. I want my wheat to grow. I can't spare my wheat. I want every grain of rich brown wheat my field will grow. Don't kill one little tender shoot. Leave all alone till harvest, and then the reapers shall pull up all the weeds, when it won't matter to the wheat; bind them in bundles and burn them [use second picture], and then gather all my wheat into the barn."

Now, Jesus Christ's disciples could not always see what He meant by these little stories. I am glad they did not, because, in this case, they were puzzled; and when the people were all gone, and they were resting with Jesus in the house, they said to Him, "Master, please make that little tares story clear to us." So, listen while we read vers. 36–43, and we too shall know what Jesus meant.

Jesus said He was the Sower. The world, with all its millions of hearts, was the field. Hearts in which His words and love were growing, were the good seed, the children of the Kingdom; hearts where the bad thoughts and wills that Satan is always sowing, were springing up, were the children of the Wicked One. Satan was the enemy. Describe how he threw his first sad seed over the walls of Eden, into poor Eve's heart; how he has been sowing ever since; is sowing to-day. Why does God let all grow together like this? For the sake of His dear children, that they may grow on till the harvest finds them full and ripe.

Jesus teaches, too, that His grace can make the nasty weeds Satan sows die and perish, and not even spring up at all in the hearts of His dear children. And then, at the great judgment, at the harvest, at the end of the world, God's reapers, the angels, will divide the two sets of children; first they will gather all the wicked in whose hearts Satan's seed has grown,

and bear them to the sad place of punishment and destruction. And while Jesus tells it He seems to hear the bitter cries of anguish and despair. And then with tender, loving hands the angel reapers will gather all Christ's children to the garner of the blessed, the bright home in heaven.

Apply: You will be there; some reaper will come and look at you, will see which you are, will bear you to your right place. Which will it be—the furnace of fire, or the garner of God? Which seed now is growing in your heart? Are you a "child of the kingdom" or a "child of the Wicked One"?

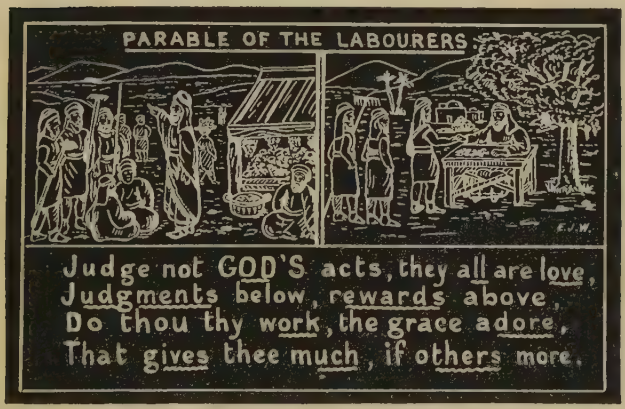
Review questions. Fill in blanks in verse, sing, and memorise.

XXI

PARABLE OF THE LABOURERS

(MATT. 20 : 1–16)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen."—*Matt. 20 : 16.*


PARABLE OF THE LABOURERS
Judge not GOD'S acts, they all are love,
Judgments below, rewards above,
Do thou thy work, the grace adore,
That gives thee much, if others more.

WE all know what parable means. Tell me some we have lately spoken of. Why did Jesus tell them? Yes, He wanted the people to learn what the subjects of His new kingdom must look for, and do, and feel, and be.

Now, let us read the bright, sweet story we are to speak of this morning. Then describe Eastern vineyard. Grape

gatherers, wine-press, basket bearers, wine makers and storers. Many hands wanted. Something like our Kentish hop gardens, or Devonshire apple orchards. Then picture gentleman up early to make sure of getting hands enough. Market-place.

Illustrate : Some place in our own town where men stand waiting for work, dock gates, etc. See him send off first party, agrees to give them the usual wage.

Explain penny then would buy as much as three or four shillings now. Tell how it was the common pay, even in our own land, when money was so much scarcer, when a fat sheep could be bought for fourpence.

Then picture gentleman at nine o'clock finding he wanted more labourers. Grapes would mould and spoil if not quickly gathered. Engaging more, this time no bargain ; the labourers feel it is a broken day, and they had better trust the good master. So again at twelve noon and three in the afternoon. [Make children explain sixth, ninth hour, etc., and see they understand Eastern time of day.] And then at last five o'clock comes, only one hour more, but the good man sees with a little more help he can clear all up that night, so down he goes to the market-place again.

Describe few poor men still waiting, lost their day, nothing to take home for poor wife and hungry children. How pleased they are to run up to the vineyard, if they can only earn just a few handfuls of corn ; how they trot about "double quick" with the basket, and give a fresh start to everything.

And now all is over. Tell of God's good rule by Moses, daily wages always to be paid at night ; no trust, no county-courting, poor folks always kept straight, "daily bread." So they shall go to the pay-table. Picture them standing round.

How many know what they have to take? Yes, only the early-morning men. If they go up first they will get it and go

away satisfied. But that is not the good master's way. He has told the bailiff to call out the five-o'clockers first.

Picture the first man with his first penny. "Please, sir, I have not any change." "Does the governor want me to come in and finish up to-morrow?" etc. Then what joy when he knows he is to take it all home! Perhaps his poor wife or little child came into the market-place, found father standing there, and had gone home thinking of empty cupboard and no wages. What joy!

So all goes on till the last come up. Then comes murmuring. What about? Have they been cheated or put upon? No, they receive all they agreed for, but they can't bear to see the other poor men, who have only done one hour's work, get the same as they do. And if they had only all been working for a bad, hard master, they would not have done so. All their trouble comes from their all having been at work all day for a good, kind man, who did not mind losing some of his money so that all his servants could go away glad and happy with their full day's wage.

Now, a parable has always a moral. What are we to learn from this? First, how we should feel towards our Master, God. [Fill in first two lines of lesson verse.] Never complain. God is Love, even when we are not, and in heaven we shall see and understand it. Second, how we should feel towards our fellow-servants. [Fill in third and fourth lines of lesson verse.]

Remember, when we want to know what we should do or think, it is always well to ask, Suppose Jesus were in my place, what would He do? Now, suppose He had been one of those early-morning men. Well, how sorry He would have felt for His companions left behind and not engaged. He would have pushed one into His place, and have stood out Himself, I am sure; and if He could not, how His face would have shone when, at nine o'clock, and noon, and three, and five, He saw

some of them coming in to work. And at the pay-table, when He saw them all getting their day's pay, just like Himself, He would have been the first to join in the shout of joyous gratitude to the good master who loved and blessed all. That is how Jesus would have felt if a man on earth. That is how they feel in heaven.

Do you think dear old Robert Moffat, who gave all his life to God in Africa, looks angry because Jesus has the penitent thief up there in glory beside Him? No, no ; all is love and joy for the joy of others—joy for God's love to others up in that bright world. Let us try to make it our joy down here.

Last of all, let us repeat our Golden Text, and then remember God puts us in our order, and out of the many recruits He calls up for service, chooses the few He will most use and reward, and when there are five-o'clock labourers we won't grumble, but just say, "What a wonderfully kind, good Master we all are working for!" Old Testament illustration: Jonathan's love for David, and feelings towards him.

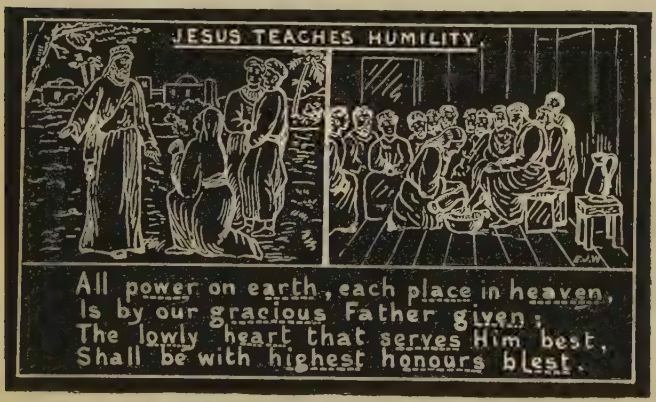
Review questions. Repeat, sing, and memorise the lesson verse.

XXII

JESUS TEACHES HUMILITY

(MATT. 20 : 17–28)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."—*Jas. 4: 6.*


JESUS TEACHES HUMILITY
All power on earth, each place in heaven,
Is by our gracious Father given;
The lowly heart that serves Him best,
Shall be with highest honours blest.

CONNECTING questions. The lessons we have been working at the last few Sundays Jesus taught in—? Yes, parables. Tell me some you remember. And now the morals they taught.

Now, this morning we are to look at a lesson Jesus gave without a story—some straight talk He had with His disciples. Now, please look at my title on the board. Which is the longest word? Now, will some clever boy from the High

School look at that long word, and tell me what short Latin word it comes from? Yes, *Humus*, ground. So Humility means keeping near the ground. Like what sweet flower, please? Yes, the modest little violet.

In our Golden Text we see the opposites. What are they? Yes, the proud and the humble. The proud are always trying to get as far up, as far away, from the ground line as ever they can, while the humble keep near the ground.

Now read vers. 17–19. They show us when this happened. On the last walk up to Jerusalem, a few days before the crucifixion, Jesus tries to make His disciples' hearts calm and ready, and full of resurrection hope and joy before that dark, sad Passover. Friday comes. Did they understand and believe Him? Ah no. Soon after His solemn words, we have these three people in our first picture coming to Him with such a strange request.

Let us read vers. 20 and 21, and see what it was, and who they were. This kneeling woman is—? Yes, Salome. Whose wife? Whose mother? And these two men are—? And what did she want? Note, in passing, Jesus must know before He promised. Apply: Make no rash promises; know first.

Now, what did sitting on the right hand and left hand mean? Yes, being next Jesus in power and place when He became King of His new kingdom. Question and explain. A mother's love. How she wants to see her boy become a great man. What Salome thought of Jesus and His coming glory. So when her sons said, "Mother, you come and ask Jesus for us," she was ready to go.

But whom does Jesus answer? Not the mother, but the two sons who had thus put her up to it. Question: What do cup and baptism mean? Yes, Gethsemane; Calvary; His trials, and sufferings, and sorrow. Can they partake of these?

Their answer. What led them to give it? Some love, some ignorance, some pride, some hope.

Christ's answer. He will give them all He has to give. Some of His cup and of His baptism. Did they get it? Yes; read Acts 12 : 2. James shared it. And now Rev. 1 : 9, John the prisoner shared it. But God the Father, the Lord of the house of many mansions, gives all the places there. He is going to raise the dead Christ, and give Him glory—"the highest place that heaven affords"; and He will arrange the Court, and fix the standing of His servants. Fill in first two lines of verse, "All power," etc. What joy for us!

Sometimes we pass some crowded scene of joy. We are told all the best front places are taken, only a few back seats left. That can never be true of heaven. We do not place the guests at table till we know all who are coming, and our Father in heaven will accomplish the number of His elect before He appoints their places.

We all expect to see James and John very near to Jesus. Why? Because they drank of His cup, and partook of His baptism. But some others of His saints may perhaps drink deeper, and follow Him into lower depths. Those places will be prepared of our Father.

Now read ver. 24. Describe anger of disciples; then (vers. 25–28) Christ's rebuke and teaching. They must not be like the proud, struggling, plotting, climbing Gentiles or heathen. They must remember always lowly service here will bring lofty honour there. Nearest the ground on earth, nearest the throne in heaven.

And then Christ, the Perfect Teacher, could point to His own example. Oh, if we teachers could always do that!

Use second picture. Tell how, when the angry, flustered disciples, fresh from their wrangle in the road, a few days after this lesson, stood round the room, each unwilling to stoop and

wash his brother's feet [describe foot-washing, sandals, etc., why so needful in the East], the dear Lord Himself took the towel and performed the lowly office.

Fill in last two lines of verse—"The lowly heart," etc.

Apply: Let us fight against proud thoughts. Copy Jesus. Keep near the ground. Leave all the lifting up to our Father in heaven. Do no climbing ourselves.

Review questions. Repeat, sing, and memorise the lesson verse.

XXIII

CHILDREN OF THE KINGDOM

(Eph. 4: 17—5: 2)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children."—*Eph. 5 : 1.*

CHILDREN OF THE KINGDOM
OM
NM
Help me the rags of sin and shame,
Oh Lord, to cast away;
To wear Thy dress, to love Thy Name,
And all Thy words obey.

INTRODUCTORY questions. Our lesson is taken from —? Where did these Ephesians live? Who knows anything about Ephesus? Temple of Diana. Demetrius and the silversmiths. The great bonfire of the wizards' books. Many converts. How long had Paul lived there? During those two years God had greatly blessed his work, and multi-

tudes had given their hearts to the Saviour. Where was Paul when he wrote this letter?

Now, I want you to think, and tell me why we Sunday scholars ought to be very glad Paul was in prison. Yes, if he had been free he would have gone and said all these things to the Churches, and as no one would have been there to take all down in shorthand, we should have lost it; but as he was shut up, and had to write to them, his letters remain, and have come down to us with many lessons and words of wisdom, just as precious to us as to them.

Now, what kind of people would these Ephesians have been? Yes, idolaters, Diana worshippers, unclean in thought and life, liars, slanderers, and all else that was bad. What would they find it very hard to do? Yes, breaking away from old habits. Turning over a new leaf is always difficult. How does Paul speak of it to these Ephesians? Putting off the old man, putting on the new man.

Now, please look at my two pictures. The first will help us to understand the Old Man, the second the New Man. I have written O. M. and N. M. over them to help you remember this.

Have you ever seen in one of Dr. Barnardo's books two pictures of the same boy, the first all tattered and dirty and ragged, as he found him; the second, the same boy, hair cut, face and hands clean, nice suit of clothes, etc., as he made him look after he got him in his Refuge? There we see the old man and the new. I have drawn two such pictures. The first will remind us of the Ephesian Christian and of the English Christian Endeavourer as he was, and is when God's grace finds him. Round the picture I have put capital letters. They are the first letters of the rags whose names Paul gives us.

Now, please look at your Bibles, and tell me the words they stand for. Yes, Ignorance. The sinner does not want to

know God, he thinks his ignorance bliss. Wants no knowledge. How foolish! What he misses. Uncleanness. Dr. Barnardo's warm bath almost the first experience of the new boy. So, too, Jesus wants our hearts cleansed from evil, washed, and sanctified. Lying—how God hates a lie. [Illustrate.] Anger, Stealing, Corrupt Communications. Dirty talk and tales, bad boys want you sometimes to listen to. Evil speaking—taking other people's characters away, telling tales and lies about others. Malice—wishing evil to anyone. Illustrate: Saul, Salome and John the Baptist, etc.

Now, these are the wretched rags in which the old man is dressed; all must be taken off and put away.

But now let us see what Paul says the new man should put on, the new suit in place of the old rags. Kindness, from kin, treating everybody as though one of our own kindred. Forgiveness. [Illustrate.] Love. [Illustrate: tales of selfishness conquered by children in themselves.] Honest Labour—the thief, instead of taking away, is to work so that he may have something to give away. Good Conversation—nice, helpful talk, that will make folks better. And last, Following God, like dear children, who so love their father they try to do all just as he does, watch and mimic all his style and ways. There must be new clothes, and steadfast walking for all God's dear children. The new man must be put on. Go on to speak of the white robes in heaven.

Apply: Have you put off the old man, and put on the new? If not, why not? Paul's letter is for us, as well as for those Ephesians.

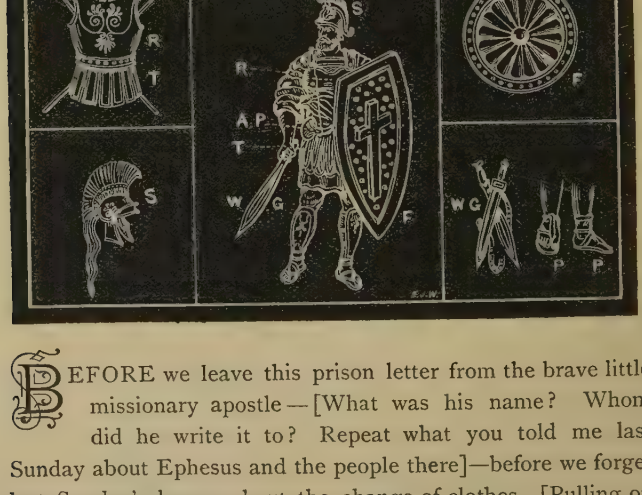
Review questions. Fill in lesson verse blanks, memorise, and sing.

XXIV

THE CHRISTIAN ARMOUR

(Eph. 6 : 10–20)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day."—*Eph. 6 : 13.*



BEFORE we leave this prison letter from the brave little missionary apostle—[What was his name? Whom did he write it to? Repeat what you told me last Sunday about Ephesus and the people there]—before we forget last Sunday's lesson about the change of clothes—[Pulling off the—? Putting on the—?]—we are to look at a few more verses that tell us of something we have to put on over these

new clothes, over that new man we spoke about. For see, our title says the Christian must be a fighting man, must wear armour.

Who knows what armour is? Did you ever see any? Yes, Charlie, you are right. That day you and I went to the Tower together, we saw lots of wooden figures like men, all dressed in it, like the soldiers of other days, of Paul's days. Our soldiers use newer weapons, and are clothed in other dress. They can run better, and march farther; but Paul lived before they had cannons and rifles and gunpowder, when soldiers dressed like those Charlie saw at the Tower.

But as you were not all with us that day, I have drawn you one of those warriors in all his armour. [Describe helmet, breastplate, shield, sword, bugle, loin-guard, shoes, their purpose, etc.] There used to be men called armourers in olden times, who made all these things, sometimes very beautifully. Damascus, Toledo, etc., were famous places for fine armour. So, in ver. 10 [let us read it], Paul tells these poor Ephesian Christians that God Himself will supply the armour they need for their warfare against their strong, fierce foes. If He supplies it, we may be sure it is the best. Let us read ver. 11, etc., and we shall see why they need such armour. They have not only to fight cruel persecutors, heathen emperors, Demetrius and his craftsmen, such foes as good Paul perhaps meant when he spoke of having "fought with beasts at Ephesus," but Satan and his evil spirits, ever on the watch for weak and young Christians, and strong ones too.

"I believe in the devil," were words Canon Miller once began a sermon with; Paul also believed in the devil; so should we; and when we do, we shall hasten to God for His armour, with which to fight the bad spirits that tempt us at careless moments, and the bad men who seek to destroy our faith.

But Paul tells us what graces and help God wants to supply; and as he makes each one of these resemble one of the pieces of armour we have been looking at, I have put the first letter of each on that piece, upon the warrior I have drawn for you. Let us look at them. Defence for loins, breast, head—armour that should cover our feelings, our minds, our living souls. Explain use in Paul's time, of bowels for heart, heart for head, head for soul, as now used. We have moved a step upward, as it were.

Now, what armour does God give us for the loins, those feelings of ours sometimes all up and joyous, sometimes so dark and doubting and depressed? "Truth." I feel all is "*true*"—true for ever—God's truth. I dare not doubt.

What armour for our hearts, our minds, our reason, our thinking powers? The breastplate of "Righteousness." Whose? Yes, Christ's — God's righteousness, satisfied by Christ's sacrifice—by faith made mine—a breastplate to defend my reason and mind from Satan.

What armour for my soul? Yes, "Salvation." If He has saved me, He will be my helmet, and Satan cannot harm my immortal soul—the head of my being.

Then look at his feet. How important a soldier's shoes are. Long marches often win victories. What shoes must the Christian wear? His daily walk, if he is to get on, must be a walk of calm, quiet "Peace" through the gospel, he at peace with God, God at peace with him, both through Christ. Then speak of conflicts with Satan. Apollyon in Valley of Humiliation fighting with Christian. Fiery darts. "Faith," our shield. Satan can drive no dart through even a little child's faith.

But all this is armour for defence. We want to drive our enemies away. What weapon have we for that? This precious sword, the "Word of God." How Jesus used it in His tempt-

ation! Three strokes with that, and Satan fled. A stone picked up and thrown will make a bullock turn and fly. A text from God's Word will do the same with Satan. Keep plenty about all ready; or, to keep to the sword, always have it in hand, out of the scabbard. But here is one more weapon. I have shown it as a little bugle. "All Prayer." Tell how Charlemagne gave all his paladins a magic horn. In danger they were to blow it, and he would fly to their rescue. Tell of King James and Roderick Dhu, "Of this small horn one feeble blast."

Well, Jesus has given us this precious "All Prayer." When foes beset us—cry to Him, and He will fly to our relief. [Read ver. 20.] Paul wanted those Ephesians to blow it for him, that he might be made strong even in prison.

Apply: If you want to conquer you must do what our Golden Text bids you. Have you done it? Will you do it? The whole? That warrior may be lost if he leave one piece off.

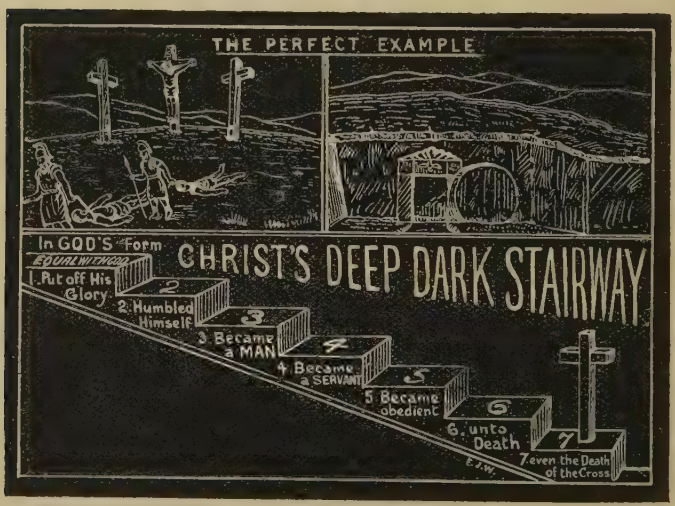
Review questions, go over picture, use letters, till all pieces are known and explained.

XXV

THE PERFECT EXAMPLE

(PHIL. 2: 5–8; 1 PET. 2: 17–25)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps."—*1 Pet. 2: 21.*



NOW, of all the men about whom I have talked to you, there has not been one about whom I dared to say to you, "Just copy him in everything." But here we have one who sets us a "perfect example." In this sweet, sad,

loving, thorn-crowned face, I see one about whom I may say, "Just copy Him in everything." Ah! you all know who it is —the dear Lord Jesus.

Now, let us read our lesson. It is taken from two letters, one written by—? Yes, Paul. To—? Yes, the Philippians— I fancy I see them reading it. Tell me some who were in the room. Yes, good Lydia and her maids, with their hands all dye-marked; and the good jailer and his family. How their eyes brighten and their ears open! It is from the dear man they sat round that wonderful earthquake night, when their lives were made all new and happy.

Now, what does this little piece of it tell us? What have I here? Yes, a stairway with seven steps, and the cross at the bottom. Christ's deep, dark stairway. The staircase He came down because He loved us so. Every step shows something He did or bore for us. At the top we see where and what He was. In heaven's own glory, equal with God, all adoring Him, the Son of God.

Now, what was the first step our lesson says He took? Yes, He "emptied Himself," put it all off, left the glory and joy and angels and rest, to come down the dark stairway. Picture king putting off beautiful garments and leaving palace and servants, to wander for thirty-three years alone in a dark desert.

But in step 2 our lesson says He "humbled Himself," gave up His kingly form and glory, and shrank from the glorious King of heaven into a little weak baby at Bethlehem.

In step 3 our lesson says, "He became a man." How much nicer to have been like others who had come from heaven to earth, to have kept His own heavenly body, like the angels who came to Abraham, and Lot, and Elijah, and many more! But Jesus became a man, a real man with a body just like ours. But some babies are born in grand palaces; and so, if Jesus is

going to be a little child here, we shall all go looking for Him where the wise men from the East did, in the grandest home in Jerusalem. But He is not there. No; our lesson says, in step 4, "He became a servant." We must look for Him where the wise men found Him, in the little house in Bethlehem. Ah, I fancy I hear some boy saying, "But some servants have good times, and do as they like." Yes; but our lesson says, at step 5, Jesus was not one of these—"He became obedient." When He was hungry He would not make the stones bread. He did every one thing His Father had said He should, even to saying that last "I thirst," when He knew His cruel foes would only mock Him. Yes, He was the only perfectly obedient servant God ever had among men.

But I think I hear some dear boy saying, "Well, I am sure the great King from heaven won't die. When His work is done, a grander chariot than Elijah's will come to bear Him back to glory; some tremendous whirlwind will waft Him back to His throne." No; our lesson says, at step 6, He became obedient "unto death." Jesus died. Yes; but we say, if He die He will choose a sweet deathbed, such as good old John Wesley had, with all His disciples weeping and listening round Him. No, He did not. Our lesson says, He became obedient "even to the death of the cross"—that dreadful death of scourge, and thorns, and nails, and thirst, and fever, and mockery, and the bursting heart. Look at this cross, and remember down to that our blessed Saviour came for us.

But now look at the first picture. The broken-hearted Christ, for the love He bore His Father and us, hangs there dead. Oh, how His Father loves Him! For that wondrous deed of self-sacrifice He is going to give Him eternal glory. Jesus touched the bottom at that cross. Now the Father's hand reaches down, and highly exalts Him, and gives Him a name above every name, at which every knee shall bow.

See, they are in my picture dragging the poor thieves away with hooks to the great cave in Hinnom. But God is sending Joseph, with sweet spices, to lay His dear Son in a new tomb. Rome's soldiers will mount guard outside it ; and bright angels, in a few short hours, will open it, and help their glorious Lord to change the linen of the tomb for robes of transfigured splendour, and then He will rise, our King, and Priest, and Lord, and Friend for ever.

And God will always own, and take and transfigure every perfect sacrifice. Our lesson in the second part, which Peter wrote, tells us we must follow these steps of Jesus—humble ourselves, become obedient, crucify our bad selves with Jesus on His cross—and then God, as we fully trust Jesus, and yield ourselves all up to Him, will give us a place with Him in the heavenly glory.

Apply : Who will copy the Perfect Example, follow Jesus ? He will carry the heavy end of every dear child's cross ; and when He goes before, the way over to Calvary becomes as heaven's own golden streets.

Review questions. Learn the steps, and sing some suitable hymn verse.

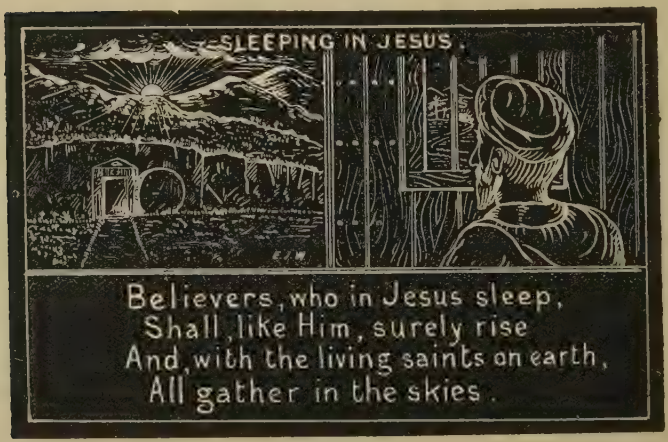
XXVI

SLEEPING IN JESUS

(1 THESS. 4 : 13–18 ; 5 : 6–10)

(*Easter Sunday*)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."—*1 Thess. 4 : 14.*


SLEEPING IN JESUS.
Believers, who in Jesus sleep,
Shall, like Him, surely rise
And, with the living saints on earth,
All gather in the skies.

TO-DAY—Easter Sunday, day of Christ's rising. Good Friday, day of His burial. So this morning our lesson is about our dying and rising again.

"Sleeping in Jesus." Sleeping, waking ; all know what this

is. Beside boys and girls, nature, winter, spring, trees, animals, insects, sleep and wake ; sun, too, seems to sleep and rise.

But there is a "long sleep" we sometimes speak of. Recall : Mother's, brother's, coffin ; the body so cold ; so fast asleep ; borne at last to grave. But things put to sleep in the earth often rise with new bodies to a new life. Grub, butterfly ; seed, plant ; grain of wheat, tall straw and wheat ears, etc.

So God, in all things round us, gets us ready for His beautiful resurrection message by Jesus. And then in Christ He shows the lesson so clearly and so beautifully. [Use first picture.]

In this open grave in Joseph's garden they laid Jesus, and in Jesus and in that grave we see what will happen to all [write] "**believers who in Jesus sleep.**" He came forth the third day—the first-fruits of them that slept. In His grave we see how God makes the seed grow and change—how a body fit for earth is changed into a body fit for heaven.

Question : Christ's new body, its powers, its ascension, etc.

Our Golden Text says, "Even so," those who sleep in Jesus "**shall, like Him, surely rise.**" [Write second line.]

Now let us look at lesson. Question : Thessalonians, Paul, Christ's promise to come again, mistake made by early Christians—thought He would come directly. Paul had often to put this right. Thessalonians' trouble — dead brother, mother, friend, not to be with them when Jesus came ; miss all the joy they were going to have. Paul writes the words of comfort in our lesson. What does he tell them? That Jesus will bring all these dear dead friends in their new heavenly bodies along with Him ; and that all His saints who are living on earth [write third line] shall be caught up, and, like Enoch and Elijah, have their bodies changed, not in the grave but in the air [write fourth line], and thus "**all gather in the skies.**" So the poor Thessalonians comforted one another with these words, when they learned "they would in no wise

precede them that are asleep," but that the dead in Christ shall rise first.

Apply first section. Use back of board, all black, without a spot of white or colour. That is how death and the grave look to those who do not believe in Jesus—all blackness and darkness for ever. But to those who believe it is all like my picture; the grave open, the stone rolled away, Jesus come forth, we coming after, and up here the glorious sun of an eternal day rising in splendour to set no more.

But now for these other verses in chapter 5, and our second picture. Porter watching for master's return, not sleeping nor drunken, but looking out, ready to open door and welcome him.

Apply: That is how we must live. "Watching or sleeping we must live with Him." Before death, watching and "living with Him"; after death, sleeping and "living with Him," in His beautiful rest-chamber of paradise, till all His elect are gathered, and the many mansions are all ready, and the judgment throne is set, and the resurrection morning dawns, and He leads the "blessed of His Father to inherit the kingdom prepared for them." When you die, shall you sleep in Jesus?

Review questions, sing, and memorise verse.

XXVII

MOSES AND JESUS

(Heb. 3)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."—*John 1 : 17.*

MOSES AND JESUS
Through Christ our great High Priest,
We pardon have and rest ;
Oh let no hardened evil heart
Keep us from being blest .

IF I were to give some of you boys and girls who best know and love your Bibles, some slips of paper and a lead pencil, and were to ask you to write down the two persons whose names were the oftenest mentioned in the Old and New Testaments, I should, I have no doubt, find on all your papers the two names written at the top of my blackboard. And if I

were to ask you for the title of the song we shall by and by hear the oftenest in heaven, you would say, I expect, "The Song of Moses and the Lamb."

But our lesson this morning puts these two names together side by side, and then shows us how the one is much more glorious than the other. Question: From what Book is our lesson taken? What is an epistle? Who wrote this one? Well, we are not quite sure. Paul always used to put his name to his letters. This one carries no name. If not written by Paul, it must have been written by some wise, good friend of his, like Apollos, who loved the Jews as well as he loved Jesus, who knew the Scriptures, and how to put his case cleverly and clearly to the people he wanted to win.

Now, let us read vers. 1–6. Question as to high priest—his duties, sacrifices, day of atonement, etc. Describe his entering the Holy of Holies with the bason of blood, once a year; sprinkling it on mercy-seat, etc.

Use first picture. Then describe the more glorious work of Jesus, the great High Priest; His great day of atonement; how He bore His own blood through the holy place, the grave, right into His Father's presence, and then came back in all His new glorious resurrection body, to proclaim our pardon.

Then use second picture. Who last saw Jesus in heaven? Yes, John. Where? In Patmos. In what Book do we read of it? Yes, in that Book of Revelation. John tells us He looked just like the great High Priest, girt round the breast with the golden girdle, standing by the golden candlestick, keeping the lamps all bright and burning; all His Churches clear witnesses for Himself.

Now, if we put these two high priests together, we shall soon see who was the more glorious. Moses and his high priest, though good men, were only servants. Jesus was a Son in the Father's house. So good Apollos, or the other good

man who wrote the letter, tries, in our lesson, to get his Jewish readers to soften their hearts to Jesus, and to learn of Him; to hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. And then (vers. 7–11) he quotes a piece of Psalm 95—these Hebrews often chanted in their synagogues—a psalm that told the sad story of their fathers.

Question: Their sin? What became of them? What did they miss? Yes, through their unbelief they could not enter into God's sweet rest-land of Canaan, because they hardened their hearts against God, and Moses, and the high priest.

But now read vers. 12–19, and we shall see God has a new Canaan, a land of rest in the midst of this life of storms, gently changing, as death draws away the curtain, into a glorious life of eternal rest in the heavenly Canaan. God's children, who believe in Jesus, the great High Priest, who trust the work He has done, and is always doing, for us within the veil, at His Father's right hand, who pray Him who stands by the golden candlestick to trim our little heart-flames every day—these dear children of God have such a time of rest—rest from fear, rest from conscience, rest from care and worry, rest from pride and ambition.

But how many cannot enter this rest, because of unbelief! What thousands of carcases were perishing in the desert! What thousands of souls lie dead and withering outside the sweet Canaan of gospel rest! And all the mischief springs from what? Yes, a hardened heart.

Question and explain. What do we mean by the heart? That within us which feels, impels, loves, trusts. How can we harden it? By not letting it move as it wants to do—towards Christ and Canaan; by letting cold and selfish thoughts run over it, till it gets like a very roadway.

Apply: What does our lesson warn us against? Yes, this hardening of the heart. What glorious contrast does it bring

before us? What says our Golden Text? Yes; while Moses brought the Law, with all its commands and penalties, Jesus brought grace, the news of pardon, and salvation, and truth, which in Him we can see, and love, and copy. Oh, choose Jesus, rest in Him.

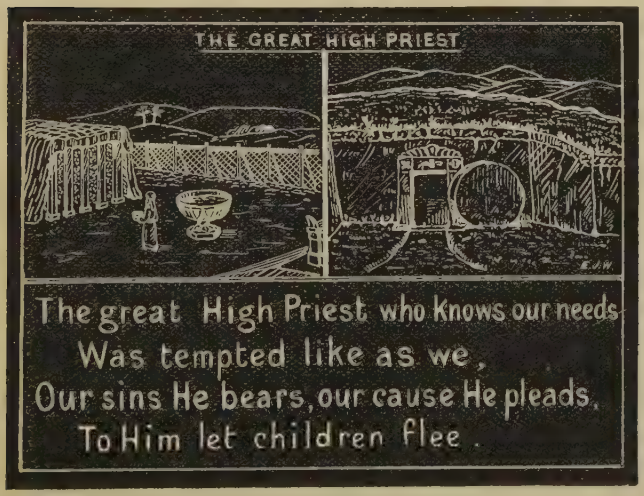
Review questions. Fill in lesson verse blanks, sing, and memorise.

XXVIII

THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST

(Heb. 4 : 14—5 : 10)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"We have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God."—*Heb. 4 : 14.*


THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST
The great High Priest who knows our needs
Was tempted like as we,
Our sins He bears, our cause He pleads.
To Him let children flee.

CONNECTING questions. To whom was this letter written? Shorter name for Hebrews? Tell me what you can about the way in which these Jews used to worship God. Question as to Tabernacle, Temple, altar,

sacrifices. Could a Jew just kill a beast and offer it to God in his own backyard? No; he had to bring it to God's altar; the priest had to slay and offer it.

Now let us read our lesson; only, perhaps, it will be well to begin with chapter 5, and end our lesson with the three beautiful verses in chapter 4.

Vers. 1 and 2 help us understand what a high priest was. First of all, he was a *man*. Why did not God send down some white, pure, strong angel to dwell in His courts, and be the high priest? Yes, he would not have had compassion on the ignorant. How his pious anger would have burned against those who knew not God! And then the poor erring ones—those who were out of the way—how he would have looked at them! foolish, wicked runaways from the good and holy God he served. As a poor little trembling Jewish boy looked up into the holy angel's stern, sad face, he would say, "This great high priest never knew what it was to have a weak heart like mine, so ready to be naughty; a trembling will like mine, so ready to give way to vanity and evil. He doesn't know what I am like, what fights I have, what needs I feel."

So God just took Aaron, a man who had faults, and big ones, and He ordained him to be His first high priest. And so our second point is, the man like ourselves was *chosen out by God*, ordained, set apart by Him. A good many people make themselves, and one another, priests; but anyone save God's own high priest would, if he had gone into the Holy of Holies, have been stricken down as those two careless priests were we read of last quarter. What were their names? In earthly courts only those can plead for us who are set apart, ordained as counsel. So we see God chose him out because the things he had to do pertained to God.

Now, thirdly, what was his work? To offer the thank-gifts

Israel brought, and sacrifices for their sins. Question as to sacrifices and sins, purpose, effect, etc.

Then, fourthly, he had to get washed and cleansed by sacrifice himself, before he could go to God for other people. [Read vers. 3, 4.]

Now, in ver. 5 we are shown that God thus appointed Christ to be our great High Priest, the last, the ever-living Priest, always waiting before God, ready to make His atonement ours, to plead His sacrifice on our behalf, and to present our praises and prayers to the Father on the heavenly mercy-seat. But He belongs to a nobler priesthood than poor calf-making Aaron did. Question about Melchizedek, the grand priest-king of Salem, to whom even Abraham bowed, seeing in him a type of the glorious High Priest who was to come.

Then read vers. 7, 8, 9, and we shall see why Jesus makes such a sweet, precious High Priest for you boys and girls to come to. He was tempted just as we are; wept and prayed, suffered and conquered, when He was a man, just as we do. So no stern angel face, severe and holy, looks down at you when you pray. The sweet, loving face of Jesus is what you see, and He seems to say, "Yes, dear child, I know all about it; I was once a little boy like you. I fought and conquered the same big temptation, and I will lead you up to God, and get you quite forgiven for the sake of My great sacrifice." And all the time the bright royal glory of the Heavenly King, the great Melchizedek, is round our own High Priest.

But now we will get back to chapter 4 : 14. What does this "passed into the heavens" mean? [Use first picture.]

Tell or question as to great day of atonement; point to white-robed priest, all his beautiful garments laid aside, carrying the bowl filled with the blood of the sacrifice right through the Holy Place, under the thick curtains, right into the darkness of the Holy of Holies, there to sprinkle it before the golden ark

and the mercy-seat. Then tell of how he will come out, put on his beautiful robes, leave his white garments in the Holy Place, and then at the gate of the Tabernacle give blessing and pardon to all the thousands of Israel who have been watching him through those open network curtains.

Now, this is what our great High Priest has done for us: He offered Himself on Calvary, our sacrifice, and then [use second picture], through the holy place of the grave, He passed into the Holy of Holies in the heavens, bearing as it were the blood of His own sacrifice, and then, coming back, left the white garments in the grave, and in His new and glorious body, robed in resurrection, He gives His blessing and His Father's pardon to all His true Israel.

Then apply, using vers. 14, 15, 16. When a little Jewish child thought of its sins, and its need of pardon, who and what did it think of? Yes, its great high priest, the Holy of Holies, the accepted blood, the pardon, and the blessing. When a Gentile child thinks of its sins, of its need of pardon, and of the long future life beyond death, who and what must it think of? Yes, of the great High Priest, who has for us passed into the heavens. To Him come boldly (ver. 16), that we may obtain mercy, and get help sent us in every time of need.

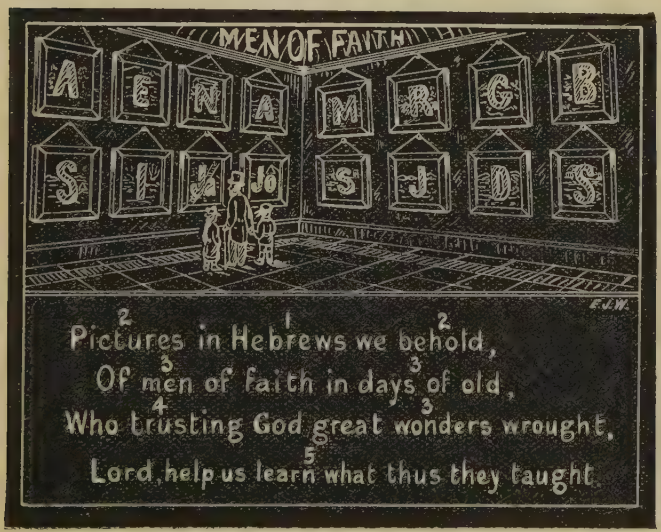
Review questions, fill in verse blanks, repeat, sing, and memorise.

XXIX

MEN OF FAITH

(Heb. 11 : 32—12 : 2)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Without faith it is impossible to please Him."
—Heb. 11 : 6.


MEN OF FAITH
A E N A M R G B
S I K J O S J D S
E.J.W.
Pictures in Hebrews we behold,
Of men of faith in days of old,
Who trusting God great wonders wrought,
Lord, help us learn what thus they taught

IN former lessons we have been looking at one portrait at a time. In this lesson we are to visit a picture gallery. Thanks to good, wise Mr. Acland, you will soon know much more of such places, for we may take you to look at them

now in school hours. My picture will help you to understand what such a gallery is like.

Once I took a great many boys to the Crystal Palace, and we went over the Victoria Cross Gallery. Each picture there showed how some brave soldier or sailor won this high honour the Queen gives for valour. In one picture we saw a brave soldier fighting his way through many foes to save his wounded comrade. In another we saw some brave sailors in the dead of night fixing a torpedo to a great man-of-war belonging to the enemy– and so on. But each picture told of some deed of courage and heroism.

Now, this chapter [write] "**in Hebrews,**" with its [write] "**pictures,**" always reminds me of that Gallery. This morning we are going through God's Victoria Cross Gallery. In it we shall see how [write] "**men of faith in days of old great wonders wrought,**" and in every picture we shall see that all their power and courage came from [write] "**trusting God.**"

When we step into our gallery on the blackboard, you will see I have sixteen picture frames, each with a capital letter inside it. That is the first letter of the good man's or woman's name, whose story the picture tells which I am this morning going to draw for you, not with my chalks, but with my tongue and voice ; and when I have put this word-picture into each, and then say "Catalogue," I want you to tell me, with the help of that one letter, about whom my picture is drawn.

Then give a word-picture of one of the most striking events in the life of each of the following :—Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, Barak, Gideon, Samson, Jephtha, David, and Samuel.

E.g., Picture 3, **N**. Here I have a man with a lot of timber round him, and some carpenters helping to build what looks like a great ship. I see the big ribs and beams and planks, and can not only almost seem to hear the strokes of the hammers and

axes, but the rude, loud laughter of these men who are pointing at the ship and mocking the builder. "Catalogue." Yes, "Noah." You are right.

Picture 5, S. Here we have an old lady nursing a bright, merry baby. Of course you think he is her grandson, but he is not; he is her own little son, the first she ever had. God promised him, and said, long before he was born, that he should be the father of a great nation. His mother at first thought it never could be, but at last believed God's promise and received this precious gift, which made her and her husband so thankful and glad. "Catalogue." Yes, that's Sarah.

So go round the room to all sixteen, and then by the letters make the scholars give all the names over again, till they know them, and can point to the special act of faith God rewarded.

But our lesson tells us of hundreds of other pictures we cannot put names to—martyrs, prophets, etc., who thought more of God than man, and loved Him far more than they feared death.

Then go on to tell that God's great gallery is not yet filled up. There will be more men of faith, more brave, trusty servants, more martyrs and confessors yet. We shall see them all, and know them all in heaven. Our lesson says, "That they without us should not be made perfect." Let me write my last line—a little prayer, **"Lord, help us learn what thus they taught,"** and remember, if we trust and love and follow Jesus, we too may be "men of faith," and, like little pictures you will see all round the big ones when you go to a real gallery, we too, in heaven, may be put alongside these heroes of God's Word. Believe His Word as they did. Go forward in His strength against all your soul's enemies, be men of faith.

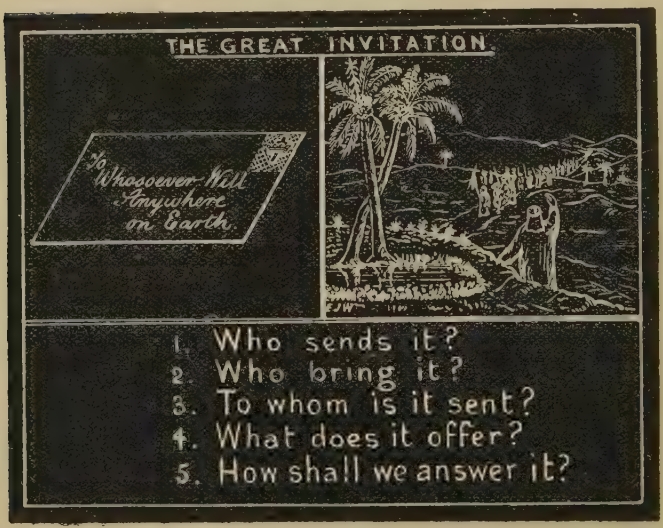
Review questions. Read, sing, and memorise verse.

XXX

THE GREAT INVITATION

(Rev. 22 : 8-21)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—*Rev. 22 : 17.*


THE GREAT INVITATION
To Whosoever Will Anywhere on Earth
1. Who sends it?
2. Who bring it?
3. To whom is it sent?
4. What does it offer?
5. How shall we answer it?

QUESTIONS. The Book? Who wrote it? Where? Why? What, amidst all its strange figures, is the one clear truth it has for us? Yes, that by and by, when all earth's storms and dangers and upheavals are over, Christ

and His Church will stand out victorious over all their foes, and that all His dear children will be gathered in the bright place of many mansions, of which John saw so much in his wonderful vision.

To-day we are to read about the "Great Invitation." What is an invitation? Illustrate: The handsome card for the Lord Mayor's banquet, sent out some time ago. Explain its purpose, etc. How pleased many men were to get it, to accept it, and then to go to the great feast.

But now, from our lesson, we must find out who issues our "Great Invitation"; by whom He has sent it; to whom He has sent it; what it offers; and how we should treat it.

1. Now let us look in our lesson and see who invites us. There are several verses which tell us about Him. George will read them, vers. 16, 12, 13. "I Jesus." "The root and the offspring of David." Who would David stand for? The Jewish kingdom, God's people in the past. Christ the Word, the Creator, the Ruler, set up David's throne, and presently came a little babe, born of his royal line, "root and offspring." And then, "bright and morning star." What does that mean? When do we see the beautiful morning star? Just before the breaking of the glorious day. So Jesus, while He is the glory of the past in Israel's story, is Himself the promise of the joyous day of heavenly life and love we are waiting for when earth's dark night is past.

Now look at ver. 12, and tell me what parable of Jesus it makes you think of. Yes, the great king coming home from his journey to hear how the talents had been used. His reward is with him. Illustrate: Father's return, the gifts he will bring his children, how we look for him and think of them, and long to see him open his portmanteau or box.

Then ver. 13. Some boy from the High School tell me what John would have put instead of Alpha and Omega, if he

had been writing to English boys and girls. Yes, A and Z, the first and last letters of the whole alphabet. Jesus is the A and Z of all God's great bookful of letters—the Bible. The Christ to come, the Christ who came, the Christ who shall come again, fills its pages with His glory from the beginning to the end. The dear Lord Jesus invites us.

2. Who brings the invitation? He brought it Himself. His Holy Spirit keeps speaking it to our hearts; the Bride, His Church, is charged to bear it everywhere [read ver. 17]; and those who hear it, and are coming, must shout to others to come along too. Use second picture: thirsty traveller at desert fountain, calling all the rest of the caravan to hurry up. Apply: Have you heard it? Are you, Christian Endeavourers, bidding others come and drink?

3. Now, who are invited? Explain and illustrate. Those asked are generally the greatest and most powerful and richest of the host's friends. One of Jesus Christ's disciples would not care much about such guests, but would ask the poor and the suffering. But this invitation takes in everybody. [Use first picture.] Look at the address. Whosoever will; anywhere; on earth. I was obliged to put that last word because of ver. 11. The invitation is only sent us here, it never comes beyond the grave; there can be no acceptance there.

4. But what does it offer? Explain: Invitation generally tells what is to be enjoyed. [Read ver. 17.] Explain water of life. [Use second picture again.] In the East how precious to the weary traveller is the cool spring. How refreshed and peaceful he feels when he has found it! Then explain soul thirst. We are never happy till we quench it. Jesus and woman of Samaria. What is the water of life?—pardon, peace, new life by the Spirit lifted to the soul's lips, as it were, by the hand of faith when we come to Christ.

But what else does our invitation say? [Read vers. 14, 15.]

When we are invited anywhere, our host's home and grounds are open to us; we have the right to drive up to his door, to pass through his grounds. And here Jesus gives us by and by the right to come to the heavenly Eden, where the tree of life is growing, where only the good are dwelling, and whence all sons of Belial are for ever shut out.

And then read vers. 8 and 9. Sometimes when a little boy is going to some grand feast, he is afraid of all the great people he will meet there, thinks they will watch him, or perhaps take no notice of him. Don't think like that about all the glorious angels we shall meet with Jesus. They will tell us they are our brethren and fellow-servants.

5. And now, last of all, how shall we treat this invitation? Earthly invitations generally have "R.S.V.P.," or, "Answer, if you please," down in the corner—and Jesus wants an answer. Will you go to the heavenly feast? Come and drink the life-giving water. Get a heart full of heavenly peace and calm to make you fit and strong for all life's work and suffering—

> "A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
> My dear Redeemer's throne;
> Where only Christ is heard to speak,
> Where Jesus reigns alone."

Review questions. Repeat headings till known.

XXXI

REVIEW SUNDAY

THIS, the most important Sunday in the whole quarter, is in many Sunday schools but little appreciated and used. The importance of repetition in educational work is sadly overlooked. The surest way to secure the retention of knowledge is to ask its reproduction, and by a second or third view of the lesson to make sure its facts are remembered, its doctrines

understood, and its impressions clearly cut and distinct. This process should follow the teaching of every Scripture lesson, both in the class and at the desk; and every month it is well to go over the four or five lessons taken, and examine the children upon them as independent and consecutive portions.

But when the Quarterly Review Day arrives, our duty is altogether different. We then need to look at the twelve

lessons in perspective, and, regarding them as a connected group, see what lessons they unite to teach—on what line of thought they range themselves in order. It is a remarkable fact that the Golden Text chosen for Review Sunday by the International Lessons Committee rarely, if ever, fails to supply that line, and to indicate the point around which they most harmoniously and effectively group themselves.

The first task of the reviewer will therefore be prayerfully to seek the teaching of this Review text, its divisions and suggestions; then, bringing up to this framework each of the twelve lessons in turn, ascertain where each should be built in, and erect out of them a structure which shall stand long and clearly amongst the scholars' Bible memories.

As an illustration we have chosen the last Review lesson of the International Series for 1895, and in the outline given this method will be applied; while the explanations inserted may, we trust, be helpful to superintendents and teachers in constructing similar exercises for their schools in future quarters.

QUARTERLY REVIEW.

Christmas 1895.

Lessons to be Reviewed.	*Golden Text.*
1. The Time of the Judges	Judg. 2 : 3.
2. The Triumph of Gideon	Ps. 27 : 3.
3. Ruth's Choice	Ruth 1 : 16.
4. The Child Samuel	1 Sam. 3 : 9.
5. Samuel the Judge	1 Sam. 7 : 12.
6. Saul chosen King	Ps. 97 : 1.
7. Saul Rejected	1 Sam. 15 : 22.
8. The Woes of Intemperance	Isa. 5 : 11.
9. David anointed King	1 Sam. 16 : 7.
10. David and Goliath	1 Sam. 17 : 47.
11. David and Jonathan	Prov. 18 : 24.
12. The Birth of Christ	Luke 2 : 10.

Golden Text for Review, "Thy kingdom come," Matt. 6 : 10.

OUTLINE OF REVIEW LESSON.

To exercise and test the scholars' memories; Write the initials of the lesson titles in proper order on one side of the large blackboard (or if in class, on one side of the cardboard). Beside these write in yellow chalk the first two words of each of the Golden Texts (*vide* page 124). At the foot write the Review Golden Text, "Thy kingdom come." Now, from this it will be clear that the connecting idea or grouping thought will

be the gradual development of the Jewish kingdom, a type of the coming of the more glorious spiritual kingdom of God. So three divisions will suggest themselves: "The Kingdom (Jewish) Coming"; "The Kingdom (Jewish) Come"; "Thy Kingdom Come." Describe three circles for suggestive sketches, and under them write these three divisions. Then over No. 1 draw a small map of Canaan as it was in Samuel's time—a few white patches amidst black heathen surroundings—the land but partly held by Israel: the kingdom coming. Over No. 2 draw another map of Canaan—all white—as it was at the close of David's reign—when all the lands on both sides the Jordan owned his sway, and the Jewish kingdom had "*come*." Then at the foot and head of the third circle draw two maps of the world—the one all black and heathen, as when Jesus came; the other all white and conquered, as it shall be when His kingdom has come.

Then arrange the quarter's lessons, placing the initials round those circles in the group to which each belongs (see page 125). Then fill in the three suggestive sketches. In No. 1 a little picture of Samuel's Call; in No. 2, of David's Victory; in No. 3, of Jesus' Birth.

All will now be ready for the Review. Commence by getting the scholars, with the help of the initials, to repeat the lesson titles; then by the two first words to repeat the Golden Text; then, turning the board or card, give a title, and ask for its text—or a text, and ask its lesson title. Do this till the children give them readily and well. Then ask for the Review Text, "Thy kingdom come." Question—Why was this chosen as our text? What kingdom have we seen coming? Whose kingdom does our text refer to? Has that come? When will it fully come? etc. etc. Then explain that we are going to group our lessons under the three heads, and round the three pictures. Take No. 1. Ask for the lessons from the initials;

then explain purpose of the little map, and question on the "Times of the Judges," "Triumph of Gideon," "Call of Samuel," "Samuel the Judge," and "Saul chosen King," working out the thought of the gradual growth of the kingdom of Israel, and how at first, when its foundations were laid on the thoughts and wishes of the people, it proved a failure. Then pass to circle 2. Question on "Saul rejected," "David anointed King," "David and Goliath," and "David and Jonathan," showing how, when the king after God's own heart acquired the kingdom, "the kingdom came," and the map shows its wide and peaceful domain. Then turn to circle 3, and, questioning on the "Birth of Christ," show how that great event marked the beginning of God's own kingdom, which has gone on growing ever since, and is now coming. Then, questioning on "Ruth's Choice," show that, while the Gentiles had here and there in the Israelitish kingdom some Rahab or Ruth, the fulness of the Gentiles shall be gathered into the coming kingdom of Jesus. And then, questioning on the "Woes of Intemperance," show how that lesson dealt not with the mischief only which the drunkard does to himself, but rather with the ruin his dreadful vice brings on the nation at large and the country in which it exists. Just now it looks as though Satan had riveted these dreadful fetters more firmly than ever on these British Isles, but let us rejoice that Christ's coming kingdom will soon and certainly overthrow this hateful traffic in poverty, crime, and death.

Apply: Are you a subject of this kingdom? Are you "hastening on the coming of the day of God"? Saved by Jesus and safe in Him, can you rejoice that the glorious hour is nearer to-day than it ever was before?